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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . . Page 585
THE SOCIAL PIONEER 588
SWITZERLAND TODAY 589
AN EASTER DIARY 590
THIS ENGLAND 591
THE NATION'S GREATEST ASSET. II.—By C. S. Orwin 591
THE PROSPECTS OF COMMUNISM IN CHINA. By George E. Taylor 593
THE RIGHT TO FEEL DISAPPOINTED. By Y. Y. . 594
CORRESPONDENCE 595
From Hector Munro; Capt. B. Acworth; William Pearson; Anne Protheroe Jones; William McGregor Ross; A Letter from Austria; J. Rosen.
INTERNATIONALISM IN THE DUCHY. By Aylmer Vallance 597
THE COVENT GARDEN SEASON. By W. J. Turner . 598
O! COME TO THE STABLE. By Patrick Kirwan Page 599
PLAYS AND PICTURES 600
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By David Garnett . . . 602
REVIEWS:
T. S. Eliot. By Peter Quennell 603
Levy on Logic. By R. H. S. Crossman . . 604
Is Freud Necessary? By Frederick Laws . . 605
Hill, River and Sea. By Herbert Palmer . . 605
"Less Bread More Taxes." By G. D. H. Cole 606
Gentle Writing 608
Modern Ireland. By Austin Clarke 608
The Pleasures of Believing. By C. E. M. Joad . 608
SHORTER NOTICES 610
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 610
CROSSWORD 612
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Toreador . . . 614

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE tragic farce that the League has been playing for so long with Italy and Abyssinia seems to be nearing its end. Señor Madariaga has got in touch with Baron Aloisi to discover what procedure the Duce may be graciously pleased to approve of, and he is making his report to the Committee of Thirteen as we write. Meanwhile, the Italian forces continue their victorious advance. At the beginning of the week they were at Lake Tana and at Gallabat on the Sudanese frontier; on Wednesday they occupied Dessye; in a week or two, well ahead of the rains, they boast that they will be in Addis Ababa. Marshal Badoglio's confidence may or may not be justified—the news from the Abyssinian side is scanty and unreliable. It still remains to be seen whether Mussolini has bitten off more than he can chew; the cost of his adventure has already been heavy, and the cost of securing and exploiting his gains may prove heavier still. Nevertheless, for the purpose of negotiating his peace, the Duce seems at the moment to have a hand full of trumps, and we must expect his demands to be pitched high.

An Honourable Peace?

M. Laval said the other day that he looked forward to an "honourable peace." All the indications are that the Italian terms will be even more dishonourable than the proposals concocted by M. Laval and Sir Samuel Hoare a few months ago. The question now is whether they can be enforced on the Emperor, or swallowed by the League. The French are apparently ready to agree to any arrangement that Mussolini proposes, however disastrous it may be to the prestige of the League; but they will hesitate to quarrel openly with Great Britain, if Mr. Eden takes the stand that we have been led to expect he will take. It is possible that they will consent—at a price which they will try to get from us—to the continuance of existing sanctions, for the little that that may be worth. Of the imposition of an oil embargo there is now very small hope, and it is doubtful whether at this eleventh hour it would have much efficacy. Military sanctions, which could have nipped the whole adventure in the bud six months ago, are of course out of the question. Failing a miracle in Africa or in Rome, it looks as if the League Powers will do no more than try to save their faces, while Mussolini proves to the world that, given the requisite audacity and unscrupulousness, the way of the aggressor is not too hard. He had learned the lesson from the Japanese, and he has passed it on to Hitler.

Sanctions at Work

The report of the League's experts on the working of the sanctions confirms our anticipation that the measures adopted would not impede the military operations but might cause considerable distress to the civilian popula-

tion by the second year of their enforcement. Little effect was visible until January. In that month imports from Italy to the sanctionist countries fell by 46 per cent. and exports to Italy by 39 per cent. as compared with 1935. This is far from the " non-intercourse " prescribed by the Covenant. More serious perhaps is the depletion of Italy's gold reserves, though this would have happened even without sanctions. One asks what services did France perform that she should have received from Italy 21 million gold dollars in January, 1936, as against 15 millions in 1935. It is noteworthy that French exports to Italy fell by less than half, while British exports dropped to less than five per cent. of normal. Italian trade with the U.S.A. is falling steeply, that with Germany rising, though at a diminishing rate.

Questions to Hitler

The Locarno Powers at their meeting in Geneva last week came to what, in all the complications, seems a most sensible decision. No active steps will be taken in the Rhineland conflict (provided there is no material change in the situation) till the next meeting of the League Council on May 11th. Both the French plans and the German proposals—if Germany will consent to this—will be put before the League for a " detailed examination," and in the interval Mr. Eden is to put some questions to Herr Hitler regarding his " offer." Some of those questions, as the French rightly insist, are fundamental. What, for instance, is the precise meaning of the bilateral treaties proposed by Germany, and how will these fit into the framework of collective security? What guarantees will Hitler offer against aggression on Russia and in certain other quarters? The unofficial answers that we get on these points are not at all reassuring. About Russia they are either evasive or defiant. " As regards the future of Danzig, Memel and Austria," to quote the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, " Germany's attitude probably is that it would not be reasonable to expect that she should tie herself up in a system of engagements, which, for example, prevented Austria from uniting with Germany of her own free will." If that is persisted in it is not easy to see a successful issue to any negotiations.

Doubts and Difficulties

Meanwhile France, occupied with her coming general election, continues to be vigilant and distrustful. The distrust, among a considerable section of the public and of the press, extends not only to Germany, but to Great Britain. This is not unnatural, but we do not regard it too tragically. Nor, at this stage, is the talk of sanctions against Hitler to be taken very seriously. In present circumstances a policy of sanctions would be futile, and it is unlikely in the extreme, unless the Germans should indulge in some new outrage, to get British support, especially with the French doing their best to lift the sanctions from Italy. The " staff talks," which opened on Wednesday in London between the representatives of France, Belgium and Britain (Italy, of course, is out of the picture), appear to have little practical importance; they are, so to speak, a cautionary gesture, and a sign of a united front on the part of the Western Powers. This is easy enough to achieve on the military side. The harder, and yet imperative, task is to get a diplomatic united front, embracing more than the three Locarno Powers, with a policy that will do justice to Germany but will also exact justice from Germany. That means in essence—as the French recognise when they are looking at Hitler, but not, unfortunately, when they are looking at Mussolini—the revivification and strengthening of the League.

The Dardanelles

Turkey's Note to Geneva demanding the right to refortify the Dardanelles throws an interesting sidelight on the whole fabric of collective security. Article 18 of the 1923 Convention, on which the Turkish claim is mainly based, attempted to ensure that demilitarisation should not imperil the military security of Turkey or freedom of navigation in the Straits. This treaty was guaranteed by Britain, France, Japan and Italy. The Turkish Note draws a pointed contrast between the concord prevailing in the Black Sea and the uncertainty in the Mediterranean, and urges that the conditions which made the Lausanne Treaty possible are now no longer operative. Two of the guarantor Powers are at loggerheads with the League. Germany has shown that treaties may be violated with impunity; Italy has revealed how an aggressor Power may profit owing to the dilatory working of the League machinery; and the rapid increase in world armaments has altered the whole atmosphere in which diplomacy must be conducted. In 1923 the protection afforded by the League might reasonably have been said to be adequate; to-day it is of the flimsiest. The Powers interested in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean may argue that an international waterway cannot be satisfactorily safeguarded by Turkish fortifications. But it will be decidedly awkward to treat a loyal member of the League with less sympathy than States which attempt to exact concessions at the point of the bayonet.

The Indian Congress

Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru opened the forty-ninth All-India Congress at Lucknow with a speech which affirmed his Socialism as boldly as his resolve to follow a militant policy towards the new Constitution. He is, after Mr. Gandhi, the most popular figure in India, but he failed to swing Congress decidedly in either direction. His advice was that the Congress Party should capture the provincial legislatures wherever possible, using them to create deadlocks and to demonstrate the impossibility of achieving any adequate measure of economic reform under this Constitution. The Executive had, however, already determined to postpone the issue whether Congressmen should accept office, by referring it to the provinces for decision. This was challenged by the Socialist group, which sustained a two to one defeat. One has the impression that the older generation of professional men, with the propertied class behind it, is fully prepared to take office, but the Congress was evidently too sharply divided to make a decision either way. Local circumstances will settle this question. That the younger generation rallied round the Socialist group could secure one vote in three for a policy of unflinching opposition, is a striking evidence of its rapid growth. A split between the Socialists and the propertied element is one day inevitable; but by securing at this Congress the right to proportional representation Pundit Nehru

has done something to postpone it. We read with dismay the news that Mr. Subhas Bose, lately Mayor of Calcutta, has been re-arrested as a *détenu*, without charge or trial, on his return to India after an absence in Europe. These are Nazi methods.

The Spanish Republic

The fifth anniversary of the Republic was celebrated in Spain on Wednesday amid enthusiasm rather heavily diluted by rain. There were a few "incidents" during the demonstrations in Madrid and in one or two places in the provinces—obviously the work, in some cases, of hooligans and, in others, instigated by Right Wing fanatics. We are glad to see that reputable foreign correspondents lend no support to the pretence that "extremism"—meaning, in plain English, murder, arson and looting—is the policy of the political parties of the Left, who are in fact the supporters of the regime and concerned above all things for orderly progress. Talk about Russia stirring up trouble seems to be pure nonsense. There is no evidence of Moscow pouring gold and agitators, in the shape of Bela Kun and other chosen vessels, into Madrid; nor is there the slightest ground for believing that Señor Caballero and other Left Wing leaders would tolerate anything of the sort. The Government appear to be tackling with confidence their difficult task. They have got, as a preliminary to more radical reforms, to satisfy the hunger of the peasants and rural labourers—hunger both for victuals and for land. They have a serious unemployment problem in the towns. They have to provide education for illiterate millions, and to meet a good deal of Clerical opposition in the process. And the State has to face financial difficulties which will test Señor Franco, the young Finance Minister.

Slums and Open Spaces

The Hackney Marshes dispute has provided the Opposition party on the L.C.C. with an excuse for a fine display of righteous indignation. Party tactics and public spirit both seemed to demand that this attack on London's open spaces should not pass unchallenged. If such an attack were successful, they protest, a dangerous precedent would be set and voluntary effort for the acquisition of public playgrounds might be seriously discouraged. In the debate at County Hall, however, simultaneous attempts to stultify L.C.C. housing schemes deprived the protest of much of its effect, and Mr. Morrison discomfited his opponents by recalling that they had shown themselves ready in 1922 to sacrifice thirty-seven acres of Hackney Marshes for industrial building. The Labour Party has proved that slum clearance can be reconciled with open space preservation. The Council which decided to introduce a Bill into Parliament regarding Hackney Marshes on the same day sanctioned further additions to the "green belt." Moreover, as the writer of a letter to the *Times* points out, the redeveloped lay out of the East End will enable other playgrounds to be built, and twenty of the thirty acres acquired will remain available for play. In Bethnal Green and Stepney alone there are 68,000 persons living in conditions defined by statute as overcrowded. A temporary curtailment of thirty acres of open space does not seem too heavy a price to pay for the clearance of these slums. A refusal on the part of Parliament to pass the L.C.C. Bill would mean a defeat for the cause of slum clearance and a victory for political partisanship.

Easter Conferences

The Easter conferences of organisations connected with the Labour movement give an impression of restlessness and lack of cohesion. The Co-operative Party debated at length in private session a motion proposing a merger with the Labour Party, which was rejected by an overwhelming majority. The Labour Party League of Youth affirmed more decidedly than before its impatience under the Party's discipline, which forbids it to discuss questions of policy. It rejected by an overwhelming majority a memorandum which defined the Party Executive's view of its modest status, and adopted resolutions which affirmed its demand for autonomy and its resolve to take decisions on policy at its own conferences. Its tendency is clearly well to the Left of the official Party. It remains to be seen whether Transport House will now admit its right to think for itself. Not for the first time the annual conference of the I.L.P. recorded the inextricable confusion in its ranks. The conference passed a vote of censure on the Executive, which had declared the Party's neutrality in the conflict between Italy and Abyssinia, on the ground that both are dictatorships. On this matter Mr. Brockway was at issue with Mr. Maxton who, however, received from the Party permission to adhere to his minority opinion. The conference resisted an effort to commit it to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and closed with a complaint by Mr. Maxton that it devoted too much attention to theory.

The State and the Land

Among a batch of measures which received the Royal Assent before Parliament rose for the recess last week, the most important was the Unemployment Insurance (Agriculture) Bill. This Act is, on the face of it, a gain to the rural worker; but it still leaves him at a deplorably low standard of life, whether he is in or out of employment. His position will only be improved with those radical changes in British agriculture which we cannot hope for from our anti-Socialist National Government. One essential change, though not the only one, is the nationalisation of the land, and we call our readers' special attention to Mr. C. S. Orwin's two articles, in this and last week's issue. Mr. Orwin is the Director of the Institute for Research in Agricultural Economics at Oxford, and is known as a leading authority on his subject. In his second article, it will be seen, he explains with admirable clearness how he considers the land could and should be transferred to public ownership. But he stops at a point from which many of us will be anxious to push on. It is true, no doubt, that "State ownership of the land does not connote State control of agriculture." But is it desirable that the functions of the State should be those of the landlord and nothing else? Alike in the interests of efficient farming and for the welfare of the whole body of workers on the land, the State will be required to play a far more active role.

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THE SOCIAL PIONEER

AT Baltimore this week Mr. Roosevelt fired the preliminary long-range salvo that opens the Presidential campaign. Much may happen in the intervening six months, but one's first impression is that this charming and optimistic personality hopes to smile his way back to the White House. The speech was a manifesto of the reformist liberalism which still derives in a Republic steeped in a hard-shell *laisser faire* tradition a pleasurable sense of daring, as it contemplates its experiments in "social pioneering." Most of them lie in ruins after the heavy tanks of the Supreme Court have passed over them. The President outlines none the less a whole series of policies which he hopes to realise, if the electorate renews his term of ambitious impotence in November. Some items in his programme seem on any conceivable reading of the Constitution to lie wholly outside the scope of Federal legislation—the raising, for example, of the school age. Other items, such as the shortening of the working week and the raising of minimum wage scales, are purposes embodied in the defunct National Recovery Act, on which Congress cannot legislate until the Constitution is amended and the powers of the Supreme Court clipped. It is apparently no part of Mr. Roosevelt's purpose to challenge that entrenchment of propertied conservatism, and American commentators on the Baltimore speech point out that, while he defined these objectives, he carefully avoided any promise to attain them by legislation. He will fall back on the safe but far from promising expedient of voluntary action. It is, then, not so much a chief of the Executive and a director of constructive legislation that voters will be invited to elect as a moral influence. By re-electing Mr. Roosevelt they may keep flowing what Matthew Arnold might have called a stream of tendency making for liberalism, but the fighting phase of the New Deal is long since ended. The conception of regulating capitalism by drastic, coercive legislation has wilted in face of the realities of American life. The balance of power lies with property, however the electors may vote.

The friendly observer experiences an acute intellectual distress as he contemplates this spectacle. We had hoped to see the experiment of a regulated capitalism tried out under fair conditions. Given a President who possessed, as one supposed, both courage and political skill, given a people desperate enough to accept brusque departures from tradition, could it be made to work? There were, indeed, obstacles in the structure of American society that have no parallel in any European country on the same level of civilisation—the absence of a trained, professional civil service, and that prevalence of "graft," which almost justifies the current American distrust of political action. But it is a simpler and cruder factor in the problem that has broken up the New Deal and wrecked an experiment from which the rest of the world might otherwise have derived a valuable lesson. The Supreme Court has ruled—to sum up in the plainest terms its judgments on the N.R.A. and the A.A.A.—that Congress lacks that right of economic regulation and control which the experiment presupposed, and its hold over public opinion is so deeply rooted in popular superstition that the President dare not challenge it.

What is left of the New Deal is a battered torso. There is the Act which cleaned up the banks and guaranteed their solvency, while leaving them still private enterprises split into innumerable units. There are the Acts, not yet in operation, which provide insurance for unemployment and old age, on a plan much less generous than the British model, and of these the former may possibly founder in the Courts. Most inspiring of all are the Tennessee Valley experiments in regional planning, and the Civilian Conservation Corps which battles with soil erosion. Allied to this is Mr. Tugwell's work in transplanting farmers from exhausted soil to regions that offer a better prospect. All this is sound in its inspiration, but the scale of it is pitiably small when measured against the colossal degeneration and impoverishment of the rural population in vast regions of the South.

The N.R.A. and A.A.A. have been swept off the statute book. None the less, enough of their results remain to justify a cautious verdict. Agricultural Adjustment did on the whole achieve what it aimed at—it restored agricultural prices to the pre-slump parity with industrial prices. The farmer has begun to recover his former purchasing power, and his ruined credit is in some measure restored—though this applies rather to the owner-cultivator of the Middle West and North than to the wretched tenants and share-croppers of the South. It is doubtful, however, how far the substitute for the condemned A.A.A. will work. The direct quantitative control of crops is necessarily abandoned; in its place land may be taken over by the Federal Government nominally in pursuit of its struggle against land erosion. It may in this way diminish the acreage under cereal crops and turn it over to fodder crops, but this policy is more readily applicable (say) in the Mississippi Valley than in the North-West. The main problem remains unsolved and perhaps insoluble. Control has been used to extinguish the former exportable surplus. The real ambition of Mr. Wallace was, however, to establish a system of quantitative planning which might be applied as readily for expansion to-morrow as for contraction to-day. He realises clearly that America's agricultural exports can revive only in proportion as she opens her doors to the manufactured goods of industrial Europe. The search goes on to discover possible exchanges that may arouse no insurmountable opposition from protected industries, but as yet with no great prospect of success. The only remaining hope of an expansion of agricultural production lies in the raising of the power of demand of the home market, which means in this connection a substantial rise in the real incomes of the lower strata of the working class.

Judged by this test the other arm of the New Deal falters and disappoints. The N.R.A. is dead, and few save the conservative leaders of American Labour regret it. None the less, the "codes of fair competition" have on the whole survived the Supreme Court's blow. Prices are still fixed by the highly organised producers; wages, with some whittling and chicanery, are still on the whole maintained; the only serious deterioration is in the lengthening of the working day. Reliable statistics, most of them official, present a disconcerting picture of the industrial field as a whole. The total number of the unemployed is round about 12,500,000—though in this total are reckoned the three millions working on "made" relief jobs, usually at wages below the current rates.

Five millions subsist on doles from the often bankrupt cities and States. When we turn to the employed workers we find that their case has worsened on a comparison between 1935 and 1934 in so far as they work daily 1¼ hours longer. Their wages are *per capita* 5½ per cent. higher, but prices have risen in the same percentage. There has been therefore no increase in the total consuming power of the working class, save by the amount by which the wages of the 1,024,000 men who were added in this year to the army of the employed exceeded the doles they previously drew. Seen from the angle of the masses this is a slow and modest recovery, nor does it offer much prospect of agricultural expansion. Meanwhile, the average profits of industrial companies rose from 4.4 per cent. in 1934 to 6.6 per cent. in 1935. Nothing, it seems, has been changed in the balance of power within this capitalist society. An owning class is still in control, which can increase its own rewards and its own accumulations, while it lengthens the working day and keeps the wages and consequently the effective demand of the working masses static. Prosperity, as Americans measure it, is still far ahead, but the old mechanism is at work by which in due course profits will destroy prosperity. At no stage in the process, not even while the New Deal was intact, was there ever a "regulated capitalism." There was only a control of output and prices by the organised capitalists themselves.

There has been, however, as the result of the New Deal, one lasting change in American life which will dominate the politics of the Republic in this and future elections. It is not a revolutionary change; its inspiration is not constructive liberalism; it fits neatly enough into the traditional pattern. Five million pensioners with little hope that they will ever again be absorbed in industry, three million men on made jobs, together with all their dependants and the tradesmen into whose tills their doles trickle, are now on a vaster scale what the war veterans were in the past—the weight that turns the political scale. It is this, and not the elation of "social pioneering," that will secure the re-election of Mr. Roosevelt, if the Republicans choose a budget-balancing Conservative to oppose him.

SWITZERLAND TO-DAY

ADOLF HITLER, it is true, was born not at Schaffhausen but at Braunau; but his theories of race and language create for him very nearly as good a claim to swallow up Switzerland as to absorb Austria. Certainly some 850,000 out of over four million Swiss speak French, while the 280,000 Ticinese speak Italian, but the best National Socialists despise Vienna as three-quarters Czech, and are there not Slovenes in Styria? Three million Swiss speak a German dialect, and their home, at any rate, has already become *Gau Schweiz* in the eyes of genuine Nazis who believe that "race-consciousness" can be gradually induced. It is scarcely necessary to insist that Switzerland holds a key position. From the Jura she controls the southern road from Germany into France via the Belfort gap; she *is* the road from France to the great Danubian basin. What, then, is the outlook for Switzerland, now that the Nazi floods are over-flowing the frontiers of Germany?

It may be safely asserted that, up to the present, Mussolini and, more particularly, Hitler, have stimulated the democratic self-consciousness of Switzerland. In spite of their social interlinking with Germany and their sympathy for Germany after, and to a considerable extent during, the war, the German-speaking Swiss are traditional democrats in the more literal sense which Swiss federalism makes possible. While their democracy is therefore more actual than ours, they share with the English, and even more with the Scots, an inheritance of rebellious Protestantism which, unlike Lutheranism in Germany, refuses to bow before the State. The majority of the German-Swiss follow the teaching of the Zürich reformer, Zwingli; Luther has no noticeable following, while Calvinism remains strong in the West. Thus to racial, authoritarian and centralist theories and to pagan cults, Switzerland has substantial resistance to offer, resistance which manifests itself in various ways.

While many Swiss people believe that the economic crisis necessitates greater centralisation in economic affairs, there is strong resistance to any political contraction of the country's much cherished federal liberties. A referendum last year in favour of modifying the constitution in a corporative direction was heavily defeated. In Socialist Basel and Zürich, particularly, there seems to exist a grasp of the practical implications of National Socialism, a real grasp which is largely due to proximity perhaps, but which is singularly absent in England. It is significant that one is everywhere asked in tones of consternation "Why do the English allow themselves to be gulled by the very type of phrase with which Hitler duped his critics and opponents within Germany itself?" The German Swiss dislike Jews, but, where we mostly forget, they remember that a merciless "cold pogrom" is proceeding in Germany. Karl Barth is back in Basel to remind them of the persecution of genuine Protestantism. Before a news film in Zürich the audience is requested not to hiss Hitler; when Hitler arriving at Essen was shown on the screen the other day, the Zürich public indulged in a good burst of laughter. To speak Reich German in German Switzerland to-day marks one out as a probably undesirable foreigner —and this is not usually due to anti-emigré feeling. The *Cornichon*, a company of actors with an extraordinarily good cabaret programme, is touring the chief German-Swiss towns with a definitely anti-Nazi programme, and *Schwyzer-dütsch* is emphasised as their medium; they sell out every night, and they are supported in Zürich, for instance, not only by the Socialists, but also by the extremely respectable *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* milieu. The Social Democrats with 51 seats are, by the way, the largest, though by no means a majority, party in the Swiss National Council. The Swiss Socialist movement is undoubtedly vigorous, and it has succeeded hitherto in preserving a high standard of life for the workers. There is, however, a rather ominous split between the Socialist party and the Trade Union leaders, since the latter have advocated the devaluation of the Swiss franc; the political leaders condemn this proposal as spelling a reduction in real wages. Any serious fall in the standard of living might shake the fidelity of Socialist waverers.

The Federal Government is determined to be deflationary. It is dominated by the Free-thinking Liberals (50 seats in the National Council, but four out of seven Federal Ministers) whose antagonism to Nazi Germany, as the *Neue Zürcher* shows, is cautious. Ostensibly both Capital and Labour are anti-Nazi to-day. But while there is no question of their being consciously un-Swiss it should perhaps be remembered that the Liberals represent financial and industrial interests which are deeply involved in the economic affairs of Germany. Swiss bankers have invested large sums in the Reich, and some two or three milliards of Swiss francs are still frozen in Germany. Though the Swiss are indignant at Germany's financial intransigence, their creditor desire to recover their wealth is exploited by the debtor, who skilfully underlines the economic dependence of Switzerland. In an autarchist world, indeed, Switzerland should logically be eliminated, for she works up imported raw materials and her imports markedly exceed her exports. In 1935 Germany exported 338.4 million Swiss francs' worth of goods to Switzerland and imported 169.7 million francs' worth from Switzerland. France came second on the list of Swiss customers, but with only 207.9 million

Swiss francs' worth of goods sent to Switzerland and only 121.3 million sent from Switzerland to France.

It would thus be foolish to deny that there are danger points in Switzerland, the kind of weak places which a National Socialist high tide might demolish. The actual pro-Nazi movement, calling itself "The Front," does not openly profess Pan-Germanism; it merely advocates Nazi methods inside Switzerland without regard for the racial paradox involved. This movement made headway until June 30th, 1934, but lost its direct importance after that. It cannot, however, be disregarded, because it expresses the views of a considerable section of army officers. After the murder of Gustloff, the *Führer* of the German Nazis in Switzerland, in February, a rather sinister illustration of the attitude of the military occurred. A certain Captain Hausammann of St. Gallen, who is publicity organiser for the Swiss Officers' Society, circulated letters in which he attacked the Swiss Liberals and Socialists with many of the phrases of Goebbels himself. He complained that the Left press in Switzerland was responsible for the Gustloff affair, and was storing up justification for a German attack upon Switzerland. The Officers' Society has declared that it does not share Hausammann's views, but the Left protestingly points out that he has lost neither job nor commission. Outside military circles it is difficult to find anyone who felt any sympathy for Gustloff, yet the Federal Government has only forbidden that a successor to him should be appointed. Local Nazi groups are free from interference, beyond the nominal restriction that they are not to be centrally organised.

Certain general characteristics of Swiss life play a little into the hands of the Hausammanns. One hears a good deal of impatience expressed with the slowness of federal machinery and with the tendency for Federal Ministers to be forever re-elected; M. Motta, who is responsible for foreign affairs, was first elected in 1911. A country like Switzerland, which has hitherto had no centralised police force, and where even judges and generals are elected, finds idealistic democracy not always compatible with modern problems. The morale of a country which has been immensely prosperous and is now faced with an as yet unabating economic crisis is obviously vulnerable.

Switzerland has an extraordinarily high figure of savings per inhabitant, and the Swiss outlook is notoriously that of a possessing class. Many young people are keenly interested in the news from Russia, but Communism on the whole is weak and the official refusal to recognise the Soviet regime is due to the efficacy of bogy talk in a country of this nature. While German Switzerland pretty definitely condemned the Rhineland *coup* of March 7th out of distrust of Hitler, the French Swiss oddly enough were inclined to blame France for the pact with Russia, so great is the feeling against Moscow in influential circles in Western Switzerland. It is possible that the Ticino is the portion of Switzerland least influenced by Fascist ideas, for the Ticino is peasant country with no real Capital and Labour conflict.

It is interesting to observe that all Swiss parties have, since March 7th, agreed to devote credits to the tune of 235 million francs to rearmament. Switzerland, after all, if she cannot be undermined by Nazi propaganda, may be directly invaded on the way to France. There is evident nervousness to-day in Basel, which now lies face to face with German troops outside the protecting line of the Jura. Since the French and Belgian frontiers are so strongly fortified, a German attack upon France would in future be likely to come via Holland or Switzerland, and in view of the German consideration for British susceptibilities, it is thought by experts that the Swiss path would probably be chosen as the right one. Thus a final question arises—will Switzerland defend her neutrality, or could circumstances arise in which she might be deflected from her present determination to do so? This may be a final question indeed for France and for Western civilisation.

Geneva,
April, 1936

E. W.

AN EASTER DIARY

I HATE such comparisons and I resent having to accept a conventional opinion, especially when supported by the respectable authority of Wordsworth, but for the time being at least I agree that the Lake district is the loveliest place in the world. I am swayed no doubt by a week of sunshine—sunshine from breakfast till twilight, when I have returned from each day's climbing to find letters from London with tales of snow and a north-east wind that shrivels the flesh and congeals the blood. (To-day, Easter Sunday, the snow has come here too). It's no use pretending to be impartial in such circumstances. How should I believe that the view from Snowdon could be as magical as the view that I saw from the top of Great Gable? I had climbed Great Gable, not Snowdon. Nor after coming to Buttermere when the sun was setting should I have taken the slightest notice of the boasts of another man who sang the praises of Loch Lomond. An Alpine climber, blathering about his exploits on the Matterhorn, would have got little change from me while I sat in warm sunshine on the top of Helvellyn watching other hikers scramble up Striding or Swirrel Edge and elderly couples making the less adventurous ascent by way of Grisedale Tarn. It did not matter how many people came on such a day and to such a place. The Matterhorn be damned! Helvellyn was big enough for all of us, and God would not have made such a Good Friday if he had not meant people to climb Helvellyn.

* * *

Determined to have a real holiday, I have avoided the very sight of a newspaper for days at a time. One evening the village postmistress remarked that she saw in "the paper" that there were "big changes." Mr. Baldwin had resigned and the Government was being reconstructed. I was astonished. Was it possible that so epoch-making an event had not communicated itself to me while I was wandering over Causey Pike? Has man no intuition? Do not avalanches occur when Baldwins fall? People would be telling me next that peace, like the Cabinet, was divisible and that, while I was eating my sandwiches on Maiden Moor, Fiji had declared war on Switzerland. I asked the postmistress where she had seen the news. She passed me the *Daily Mail*, with headlines about Neville Chamberlain taking Mr. Baldwin's place and Lord Halifax succeeding Mr. Eden, who was to go to the India Office. I sought confirmation. But the wireless was silent about these momentous changes and the other papers were equally behind the times. Of course, on looking more carefully at the *Daily Mail* it was possible to observe that these events were not announced as having actually happened, but only as being just about to happen. But the story was so confidently told that it took in the postmistress and puzzled me. Was there anything in it? Mainly, I suppose, the wish was father to the thought. Lord Rothermere and a lot of other people want to get rid of Baldwin, and someone "in the know" has dropped a hint and the *Daily Mail* has overheard it and thought the stunt good. After all, Baldwin *may* go quite soon and he will go all the more quickly perhaps if he is pushed. If he does go soon, the *Daily Mail* can claim credit: if he doesn't, most people will forget. On the same principle Mr. Bottomley was the only person who correctly prophesied the date the war would be over; he said at intervals of a few months all through the war that it would end in six months. Eventually he was right. It had to be over at the end of some six months. The public memory is short. You can gamble on that. But doesn't the *Daily Mail* overplay its hand? Judging from the number of people I've heard of recently who used to read it and who now read the *Daily Telegraph*, I suspect that Lord Rothermere's contempt for his public is even greater than it deserves.

* * *

Walking on the hills this week I have looked often at the trees, not only because no one with eyes in his head can help

looking at a beech tree when its buds are beginning to burst, but also because I was interested, just before leaving London, in the House of Lords debate on afforestation in the Lakes. I am not surprised that a petition against the Forestry Commission's proposals to cover some of the finest Lake country with spruce and larch should have been signed by more than 11,000 people, including an Archbishop, numerous peers, M.P.s, writers, public men of all sorts, local residents and fifteen climbing, walking and holiday-making societies. Whether the Forestry Commission would really carry out the awful threat to "ring" birch and oak trees and leave them to die I do not know. But I am sure that apart from such hideous vandalism, Eskdale and Dunnerdale (and who knows what other lovely valleys?) will be changed for the worse if they are corseted in a stiff garment of regimented conifers. The peculiar jollity of this country is the freedom to get on to the hills where you will. When the Forestry Commission promises to preserve our "rights" (rights by courtesy mainly) does it think, I wonder, that to leave only fenced paths between larch plantations is not to impair our rights? Several things about the scheme puzzle me. I gather the Commission is willing to compromise and plant less than it intended. The odd thing is that it regards the thing as worth doing at all. The tops of these hills are fortunately unplantable anyway; the Commission had to buy 7,000 acres in Eskdale and Dunnerdale to get 2,100 plantable acres. And why the Lakes? One can think of barren patches of England which would not resent even plantations of conifers. The gaps in the Commission's map suggests that while it does not mind upsetting the sheep farmers of the Lakes, it does fight shy of offending any shooter of grouse. Finally, is the Forestry Commission really convinced that it must concentrate on conifers, which for a country like England are so terribly poor a substitute for our natural deciduous trees? I am told that the chief reason for planting conifers is to provide pit props for the trenches in the next war! Apart from the economics of the matter, which, I gather, are highly dubious, is it not worth remembering that beauty is an asset, that a plantation is never a wood, that nothing grows under it, and that, to quote a good authority, "in the spruce districts of Southern Germany the ravages of the moth have been a serious menace," since "with the destruction of all the broad-leaved trees all the birds withdrew, and we can do nothing to save the life of those trees but spread arsenic from aeroplanes." Shall we come to this in Eskdale?

* * *

The book I've most enjoyed reading this holiday is E. M. Forster's *Abinger Harvest*. It has been reviewed already in this paper. Some of the best things—his *Times* Centenary article on Himself, the "Doll Souse," "My Wood" and others, I remember well from their original publication in this and other papers. I read with particular interest the speech he made at the International Congress of Writers in Paris last year.

> As for my politics you will have guessed that I am not a Fascist—Fascism does evil that evil may come. And you may have guessed that I am not a Communist, though perhaps I might be one if I was a younger and braver man, for in Communism I can see hope. It does many things that I think evil, but I know that it intends good. I am actually what my age and my upbringing have made me—a bourgeois who adheres to the British Constitution, adheres to it rather than supports it, and the fact that this isn't dignified doesn't worry me. I do care about the past. I do care about the preservation and extension of freedom . . .

And I like specially this passage near the end of the speech:

> I am worried by thoughts of a war oftener than by thoughts of my own death, yet the line to be adopted over both these nuisances is the same. One must behave as if one is immortal, and as if civilisation is eternal.

Later on he has a delicious essay on "the godmother of his great aunt," Hannah More. He begins by reminding us of the often forgotten fact that Hannah and her astonishing sisters were able to devote themselves so wholeheartedly to good works because Hannah was once a successful author. Which reminds me of the most perfect piece of Victorian sententiousness I ever came across. It was in a little volume about Famous Women written, I think, about 1860. The writer, a woman of very strict principle, recalls with pious regret that in her young days Hannah so far fell from grace as to write a play. True, she says, the play had a good moral. Nevertheless, "the dew-drop on the deadly nightshade does not neutralise its poison."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mr. O. G. S. Crawford.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

The League as a whole had done very well in regard to Abyssinia.—Earl Stanhope in the House of Lords, reported in the *Times*.

Watkins told the court he was drunk and not responsible. He was found not guilty and immediately released, his character still unblemished.—*News Chronicle*.

The Astaire-Rogers combination holds the stage most of the time, but there is room for a newcomer of charm, Harriet Hilliard, who sings, "Get Thee Behind me ——" (the "Satan" has been cut by the British Board of Film Censors) and handsome Randolph Scott, as the philandering comrade of Fred.—*Evening Standard*.

Mr. W. D. Williams, Carrog, said there had been an epidemic of Whooping Cough amongst children at Carrog almost throughout the winter. It still prevailed in the district, and it was said it would not clear until the arrival of the Cuckoo in the district. The Clerk: The Cuckoo has not yet arrived.—*Llangollen Chronicle*.

With all its drawbacks the British Service rifle is a particularly sweet weapon, both to handle and to fire.—The *Times*.

Gunn was a brilliant sportsman in every sense of the term . . . yet, a sporting idol as he was, Gunn never forgot the sterner side of life and for years he sang in the parish church choir.—*Eastern Football News*.

THE NATION'S GREATEST ASSET

II

LAST week I outlined some of the more important disabilities inherent in our present system of land ownership, and I showed how land legislation for many years past has been directed towards mitigating the consequences of these disabilities. Legislation is seldom anticipatory, and it is obvious that Agricultural Holdings Acts would not have been passed until many farmers had suffered from the want of them; Town Planning and Ribbon Development Acts have been carried only after local amenities have been ruthlessly violated in many places; powers for the compulsory purchase of land for the public services have been given only because the difficulties of acquisition were acute.

If it be accepted, then, that private property in land is an economic handicap in national life, let us now consider the alternative. It is not realised, perhaps, how much land is already in public ownership of one kind or another. The Crown and the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall own nearly half a million acres. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners administer about a quarter of a million acres distributed about the country. Charitable trusts, of which the Universities and Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge are the most important, control investments in land which are believed to be even larger, although exact information is not available. In the last thirty years, another class of public landowner has appeared, namely, the County Council. Under the Small Holdings Act, 1908, the County Councils are empowered to acquire land, compulsorily if necessary, for the purpose of land settlement, and the

acreage that they have bought is very considerable. At the end of 1934, 389,754 acres were in the ownership of the English County Councils, the amount ranging from 29,510 acres in Norfolk and 22,074 acres in Somerset down to 187 acres held by Westmorland. The figures for the Welsh counties add some 64,988 acres to the total, making about 454,742 acres in England and Wales in County Council ownership, and some of the Councils are now the largest landowners in their counties.

From these figures it is quite evident that there is already a large acreage of land, which, if not nationalised, may be described as being in public ownership. Now, it has never been suggested that the management of Crown, Church or College estates is inefficient or extravagant. Administration from the neighbourhood of Whitehall has never involved any handicaps on agriculture nor is it associated with "an army of Government officials," that bogy which is always put up to frighten people when public administration is in question. On the contrary, the Crown or the Charitable Trust, being exempt from income tax and surtax, and knowing nothing of death duties, have money to spend on administration and development beyond the means of the private landowner, and there is competition amongst tenants to live under these landlords. Therefore, with this experience, we may dismiss the idea that public administration of land is wasteful or inefficient.

The only question is, then, how could the transfer of land from private into public ownership be effected. It should be made perfectly clear at the outset of any negotiations that the present owners could be sure of a square deal. Their investments have been inherited or made under the law of the land, and there could be no justification for any discrimination against them. Even if the recognition of this principle should involve the State in payment to private owners for land values which clearly have been created by the community, as must surely happen in every urban area, the necessity must be accepted, for it arises not from any wrongful action of the private owner but solely from the tardiness of the State in taking steps to secure these values for itself.

With the principle of full compensation established, how is the figure to be arrived at? Everybody knows that the value of land is not always a simple issue. While the annual value, or rent, may be often a fair measure, there is much land let for relatively small sums or even not let at all, which has a value for development purposes, building, mining, aerodromes, etc., which is a matter of speculation. For all land, therefore, for which values are claimed, whether immediate, deferred, or potential, above those of its present use, the present rent affords no basis for compensation. It follows that any simple system of valuation, such as the capitalisation of the net rent or of the Income Tax, Schedule A (Property Tax) assessment, would be useless, and at the same time it is obvious that professional valuations of such land would break down, partly under the weight of the work to be done, but even more because development values are so much more matters of opinion than of fact.

Fortunately there is a simple way out of the difficulty, and this is to require every landlord to value his own land. On the purely agricultural estate he would do this readily enough by capitalising net rentals at the current rate of interest—say at thirty-three years purchase. On land to which he attached some prospective value, the landowner would add to the capitalised value of the present net rental such a sum as he or his advisers attached to this prospective value, having regard, of course, to the number of years by which its realisation was expected to be deferred. If the legislation by which the State were empowered to acquire land gave to the State the option either to buy at the landlord's own figure or to use it as the basis of valuation for Income Tax and for local rates, there would be no inducement to landlords unduly to inflate their valuations. The State could buy or it could tax, and the basis of the purchase price or of taxation would be the landlord's own valuation of his property. Either he would get payment for it or he would be taxed upon it, in either case at that which he himself had said it was worth.

If this principle of valuation were adopted, every hereditament in the country would be easily and speedily valued. But the transfer of property to the State would take time, and the slowness of the process would be an answer to the objection of those who fear that the magnitude of the State purchase would impair the national credit and add to the cost of Government borrowing. Payment would be made, of course, in National Land Stock, and the issue of this to landowners gradually over a considerable term of years as the transfer proceeded, should have little or no effect on the money market.

As to the procedure in the transfer, a beginning would obviously be made with the land and property in rural areas and with the undeveloped land in urban areas. The urgent need is to secure national control as soon as possible over all the land in the country which has not already been exploited for building, transport, etc. But there could be no exceptions; the ultimate object must be to secure the transfer of all land. When the rural land and undeveloped urban land had been acquired, the next step would be the acquisition of all site values already developed for any purpose.

The question of administration of the State property must next be considered. A Ministry of Lands would have to be created. It would be an accounting institution and it would be responsible for the staffing of the local administrative offices, but it would have no part in questions of ordinary estate management. Land management is a business calling for prompt decisions by someone on the spot, and any system of control of the national estate based on reference to a superior authority in London would break down in practice. The Ministry of Lands should inaugurate a system of administration resembling as closely as possible that which exists on the best managed private estates to-day, whether urban or rural, for which responsibility is vested in agents who answer for their actions to principals. Each county, probably would have a County Land Agent responsible to the Ministry, and the county would be subdivided into administrative districts, each under the charge of a District Land Agent responsible to the County Land Agent. Clerical and technical assistance for the County and for the District land agents would complete the personnel. The size of the administrative districts would depend upon the nature of the localities. A District Land Agent could handle a much larger area of Mid-Wales than of Middlesex. It must suffice, now, to point out that there would be both an increase in the efficiency and a saving in the cost of administration when the units were defined by the capacity of a competent land agent or surveyor rather than by the limits of a private owner's estate. The service would be recruited from the members of the land agent's profession who administer the land, rural and urban, to-day. Such a system of administration would involve very little change in principle from that which now prevails.

The advantages to the landowner of a land purchase scheme are obviously limited. As one purpose of such a scheme is to secure to the community such values attaching to land as arise out of the needs of the community, it follows that the landowner will be deprived of these opportunities of private profit. But many of them, agricultural landowners particularly, would welcome the opportunity to give up a burden which presses more and more heavily on them, which they have endured, often, as a honourable obligation to their tenants and neighbours.

The advantages to the State have been suggested already. The provision of land for all purposes in the public interest—housing, road construction, land settlement, afforestation, aviation grounds, open spaces, playing fields, and so on—would be a simple matter, freed from protracted negotiations, expensive arbitrations, and cumbersome conveyancing. Income tax collected cheaply by deduction at the source from the Land Stock, would take the place of the Property Tax, the assessment and collection of which is relatively costly. The laborious compilation of maintenance claims in the estate office, and their

examination in the office of the Surveyor of Taxes would be eliminated. Land Tax would be automatically extinguished. The redemption of Tithe Rent Charge would be quickly arranged if the State were the sole party to the negotiations with Queen Anne's Bounty; the voice of the aggrieved tithe-payer would be no more heard, and General Dealers' Ltd. could go into liquidation. For administration the land would be blocked out into areas defined solely for convenience, with a great saving in the cost now incurred. Many private estates are too small, and the larger ones are often too scattered, to secure this.

When once the transfer from the private owner to the State had been effected, life for the great mass of the population would be unaffected. The present owners could remain in possession of their homes as tenants of the State; fixed incomes from Land Stock would take the place of the rents of land and houses previously enjoyed. Tenant farmers would continue under the agent of the State instead of the private landlord, while owner-occupiers would be relieved of their mortgage debts. At the same time, both would be free to pursue their industry as before, for State ownership of the land does not connote State control of agriculture. The functions assumed by the State would be those of the landlord and nothing more. In rural districts, agriculture would go on as now; in urban areas, sites owned by the State would be developed by private enterprise, subject only, whether in town or country, to the overriding interest of the community.

C. S. ORWIN

THE PROSPECTS OF COMMUNISM IN CHINA

[From a correspondent who has recently returned after five years' residence in China. The author talks Chinese fluently and has travelled extensively in China.]

THE graveyard of Communism in China has been prepared, according to Nanking, and we have only to wait for the Red Armies to starve in the mountains of Szechuan. Admittedly these armies marched through the Government's cordon around the one-time Chinese Soviet Republic of Kiangsi, an earlier graveyard, and Communist generals, after being reported as dead, have been flattered by the rewards offered for their capture. But this time is definitely to be the last. Another lost cause is about to be added to an already long list. Not even Trotsky will be there to weep at the grave. Why, indeed, should he? He has never believed in victory for the Chinese Communists if they took up arms in alliance with the Kuomintang, for to him the struggle lay entirely between the industrial workers and the bourgeoisie. The suicide was predicted.

The Nanking Government, of course, claims that the Soviets are dying a violent death, and congratulates itself on the passing of a nightmare which has haunted it for eight long years, as well it might have, for the past has not been pleasant to look upon. It is only a dozen years since the Kuomintang (National People's Party), now the National Government of China, a party that did not pretend, at least before 1927, to represent the masses, was joined in unholy matrimony with the newly formed Communist Party, which sought support only among the peasantry, the soldiers and the proletariat. The marriage lines summed up the aims of the revolution as being anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, but this programme merely papered over the cracks between the real interests of the two parties. Many expected an early divorce, but few anticipated that the revolutionary honeymoon would break up, as it did, before reaching Nanking, that the Kuomintang would establish a National Government with the co-operation of the foreign powers, and be faced with a revolting Communist Party and Army. It was natural that both parties should claim to be sole legatees of the Revolution and inheritors of the whole estate. Hence eight years of civil war.

The National Government has created a new China and given her far more than the façade of unity, yet, unless it believes its own propaganda, several questions should give it food for thought. Funerals may be prepared, but is Communism being buried dead, or alive? Is there any reason to believe that the dragon of revolution will not in the future, as in the past, grow new heads faster than old ones are lopped off? Does the strength of Communism lie in its territorial extent or does it depend on other things—the quality of its leaders, its capacity to win the support of the people, and its social and military strategy?

To this question Chiang Kai-shek himself provided the answer when he stated that the Chinese Soviets must be fought with 70 per cent. political and 30 per cent. military methods. In other words, Communism in China can be estimated only by its nature, not by its size. Here two warnings are in order. Communism cannot be dismissed either as mere agrarian revolt or as ordinary banditry, though many, out of blindness or interest, take this view. It began in the big towns and was forced out into the poorer rural areas which are least worth defending by the Government. The backbone of the party is still the industrial workers, students and soldiers. In the movement as a whole, however, the peasantry necessarily play a large, though subordinate, part. The Communist strategy is to give proletarian leadership to agrarian revolt, a task for which industrial workers are well fitted in a country where so many of them come from and return to agriculture. On the charge of banditry, it is true that the "Communist Bandits," as the Kuomintang so cleverly classifies the Red Army, are open to the charges of killing, looting and kidnapping, but all this has been done, by and large, with discrimination and for a purpose. The discrimination is between various classes in the villages, the purpose is the sovietisation of China.

What was done in the application of Communism in Kiangsi can be repeated elsewhere. The 70 per cent. political and 30 per cent. military methods of Chiang Kai-shek might well describe the strategy of the Communists themselves, for their social-economic policy has to be backed by the Red Army. The Communists, for example, always drive out the existing Government, and certain classes such as landlords, usurers and rich merchants are "liquidated." Then, as in Kiangsi, the land is divided, but not nationalised, the agricultural labourers receiving good land, the rich farmers, bad. Economic change is made permanent by the establishment of village, district and provincial soviets; the political sense of the peasantry is aroused by propaganda, organisation and participation in local affairs. The toleration of private trading ensures the allegiance of the small merchants, while the encouragement of co-operatives gives the State some control over prices. By factory soviets the industrial workers are given considerable power. Though special privileges are usually given to the Red Army, to keep up morale, the military is always under civilian and political control, and in administration the Communist Party, unlike the Kuomintang, ensured that each soviet executive committee should include non-party members, a wise provision for a new Government. Thus it is easy to understand why the Soviet Republic had the willing support of a large section of the people, why the Red Armies, with very inferior military equipment, defied five campaigns against them, and why the Government was finally compelled to change its policy and imitate the Communists in order to defeat them. It is some indication of the hold that Communism took in Kiangsi that the Central Government, after recapturing the province, has been forced to accept the Communist redistribution of land in seven counties.

It is one thing for Nanking to accept a military challenge; it is another thing to meet the challenge of achievement. The military struggle has always been unequal. Since 1927 the "Reds" in China have received only advice and inspiration from Russia, but this has been sufficient to rob them of that air of legitimacy which permeates the National Government, with its German military advisers, its Italian and American aeroplanes and aviation instructors, and its League of Nations

experts. No wonder that the official British attitude towards China changed when the Kuomintang broke with the Communists in 1927, and that Anglo-Chinese relationships were then much improved by the Far Eastern activities of that holy and mysterious thing, British foreign policy. To the Chinese Soviets, of course, British foreign policy is neither holy nor mysterious. To them, as in earlier days to the Kuomintang, the British Empire is part of that ring of imperial powers which has encircled and invaded China with fleets, armies, loans and spheres of interest. Indeed, if the Chinese Red Armies had received as much material help from Russia as the Kuomintang has from Europe and America, the hammer and sickle would now be floating over most of China.

In achievement, which is a matter of quality rather than quantity, the Communists have a case and a hope, as we have seen. But a good case is no guarantee of success. The obstacles are obvious and enormous. The real problem is whether the party can develop from its new base in Syechuan and expand in non-soviet territories in spite of rigorous censorship of the press, prostitution of the intelligentsia through political intimidation, repression in the universities, Government control of trade unions, and all the secret arrests that are customary but none the less to be deplored in a country that has few civil liberties. For the Communists, external conditions are important but the problems of party growth, leadership and morale are paramount. Granted the right conditions, would they be equal to the occasion? At the moment they would not; they have neither the army nor the organisation for countrywide sovietisation. It may be comparatively easy to recruit and proselytise soldiers; it is much more difficult to expand among the other classes, students and industrial workers, upon which the party depends for leadership. Not that sympathy and support are lacking among the latter. Red trade unions exist in most large towns, and "cells" abound all over the country, and in other classes, such as the poorest peasants and the city poor, material for the movement is plentiful.

These materials have been largely increased by Japanese aggression. Loss of trade and revenue after the Manchurian incident, the cost of the fighting and destruction in the Shanghai war of 1932, the short struggle over the seizure of Jehol in 1933, and the further financial losses apparently involved by the setting up of the Hopei-Chahar political council in 1935, have robbed the nation of funds which might have gone into reconstruction, have made the army the first charge on the national treasury and have undermined the moral position of the Nanking Government. What, indeed, can Nanking do? If it allows China to become a protectorate of Japan the present tendency for national patriotism and Communism to become identical will be increased in direct proportion to Japanese domination. If it should fight, the economic consequences are likely to be disastrous for China, and large bodies of unpaid soldiery would be easily converted to Communism. Nor is there much possibility of a compromise with the Communists in case of war with Japan. It is an awkward dilemma. In the meantime it is possible, according to some, that we may soon see the establishment of autonomous Soviet Republics on the Outer Mongolian model, in the west. It is said that in Kansu and Ch'inghai, where racial, religious, and economic-political antagonisms are prevalent, there would be good material for the enlargement of the Communist movement. The future, however, depends almost entirely on the Japanese. There is no shred of evidence to show that Russia, any more than England, is helping the Communists in China. Japan, the self-appointed bulwark against Communism, is in reality its best friend. Finally, the strength of Communism is potential rather than actual, and a movement that includes, as it does, a well-organised party, a powerful social economic programme and strategy, and the memory of considerable achievement, is not yet ready for the grave. Nor is it likely to be successfully interred while Japan is plundering the homes and lands of the gravediggers.

GEORGE E. TAYLOR

THE RIGHT TO FEEL DISAPPOINTED

I HAVE had a vile holiday. I do not remember ever having had a viler. I got wet through. I got blown through. I was pursued by rain, thunder, hail, snow and sleet—all in the course of a couple of hours. When in the house, I kept opening windows to let in fresh air and closing them again to keep out draughts. Till this Easter I had always longed to live in the country, but a week-end's experience of the country during one of Buchan's cold spells has converted me to a belief in the beauty of built-up areas. I should not have minded if it had merely rained, not even if it had rained all the time, for one expects rain in the country, especially during a holiday, and a dripping, still, enervating Spring day can be very peaceful and pleasant. But it is impossible to be comfortable in weather of the icy, blowing, nagging kind. There is no pleasure in walking, no pleasure in sitting down. One would far rather be spending the week-end at home in bed. In fact, there is nothing to do, unless you play one of those escapist games, like golf. I sat in the house most of the time, and I hate sitting in the house.

Scarcely had I returned from my holiday, however, when I found a leader-writer sneering at me and people like me who are honest enough to confess that we did not enjoy our holiday. He quotes Confucius at us—Confucius whose philosophy was never put to the test by an April week-end in England—and tries to shame us with that armchair philosopher's aphorism: "The higher type of man seeks all he wants in himself; the inferior man seeks all he wants from others." And he adds: "Those who spent a dull Easter because there was 'nothing to do' in four days of leisure prove what Confucius said." I have a strong suspicion that this cheerful leader-writer spent the Easter holiday at work in London. I have often sat in my office in London while other people were on holiday during periods of foul weather, and Confucius himself could not have borne the sufferings of the holiday-makers with greater equanimity than I did. Rain by the bucketful, thunder on the left and right, gales at ninety miles an hour—I could see no reason why any of these things should affect the happiness of a man who was really wise and had, so to speak, plenty of internal resources. Holiday-makers, like the rest of us, I told myself, must be prepared to take the bad with the good, and I recalled the joy of getting soaked through at the age of eleven and the majesty of storm-swept seas flinging their foam high among the seagulls and salting the windows of farmhouses three miles inland. I ended, indeed, almost by envying people who were able to be out all day in such incredibly foul weather. The leader-writer from whom I have quoted is not the only (occasional) disciple of Confucius in the land.

When one is on a holiday, however, it is different. Here Confucius is no longer in an armchair, but in the back seat of a motor car or in a cottage in the country or a hotel lounge from which he cannot escape owing to the east wind or the rain. After gazing through the window for a few moments at the abominable-looking landscape, he may say to himself, encouragingly: "The higher type of man seeks all he wants in himself." But, after he has gazed for half-an-hour and has noticed how the landscape has grown increasingly abominable-looking, he becomes more honest with himself and asks himself: "If the higher type of man seeks all he wants in himself, why the dickens did not I, who am the higher type of man, stay at home instead of imprisoning myself like this in the country?" And from this he advances to a consideration of the character of the higher type of man and of what, if we all belonged to the higher type of man, would happen to the modern world. In the first place, it is obvious, the higher type of man would never want to go out of town during holidays. He would say to himself: "All I want is in myself. Brighton is not in myself. Hindhead is not in myself. Therefore, I do not want Brighton or Hindhead. Why, then, not save

money by staying at home?" And, indeed, half the philosophers have warned us against the folly of expecting too much from change of place or change of air. Change your character rather than your locality, they tell us; without change of character, change of locality is useless.

This is very true; but what would happen to the hotel industry if we all acted on this principle? Margate would be bankrupt within a twelvemonth; the whole south coast, where stockbrokers have for so long gloried and drunk deep, would become a devastated area; and thousands of hotel-keepers and waiters would be applying for the dole. No one has yet, so far as I know, written a treatise on the economic consequences of philosophy. It is time someone did so, lest the leader-writer, with his talk about Confucius, should turn England at once into a land of philosophers and into a wilderness. Nor, if he has his way, will it be only the hotels that crumble into ruin. The railways also will be hard hit by the absence of millions of people who are seeking all they want in themselves. Motorists will be reduced in number by seventy-five per cent. In vain will restaurants try to corrupt the Confucianist with exquisitely flavoured dishes: the philosopher, seeking all he wants (except vitamins) in himself, will order a large portion of bread-and-cheese and a glass of water. As for wine, whisky and beer, they will become a memory of the past; and the tobacco-trade will be completely wiped out.

I do not say that even this alarming prospect should make us shrink from following Confucius or that the world would not ultimately be the better for our abstinence. At the same time, I hold that the higher type of man should think of others as well as of himself and that, if he sees that seeking all he wants in himself is likely to land his neighbours in the bankruptcy court, he ought to become a practising philosopher as slowly and as cautiously as possible, lest his change of character should begin by doing more harm than good.

My own feeling is that the ordinary man cannot be expected to change his character all at once. Having been taught that the growth of civilisation is to be measured by the increase of his wants, and having been trained by advertisers to seek what he wants from others, he cannot with an easy conscience turn apostate to the faith of his fathers and defy the loud evangel of the big advertisers by suddenly beginning to seek all he wants in himself. This being so, I should advise him, while changing his character to continue to change his locality also for a considerable time during holiday seasons. Let him seek what he wants, partly in himself and partly from others. Besides being philanthropic, this will enable him to enjoy the experience of being disappointed in two ways instead of only in one. I write in bitterness.

For myself, I began my holiday in a spirit of perfect altruism. I never dreamed of seeking all I wanted in myself: I sought all I wanted from others. I was content—even insistent—to be driven out of town by others. I looked forward to being cooked for by others and to having my glass filled by others in a number of country inns. And in none of these things did others fail me. But these were not the others who mattered most to me during the Easter holiday. I could rely on these as on the calendar. The real Other—the Other with a capital letter—from whom I was seeking what I wanted was Nature; and Nature, I told myself as I drove out past the suburbs into the chill sunshine, was going to give us all one of the most wonderful week-ends of our lives. It was cold at the moment, but the weather prophets told us that, if only we could be patient as we shivered on Good Friday, warmth would follow and we should enjoy the Easter of our dreams. As the car hummed along, I could almost hear the willow-wrens that would be making the air sweet with their thousandfold song in two days' time. I could see myself pausing at a bush to try to see the blackcap that was singing. In my mind's ear I could hear the iteration of the chiffchaff. I could see my first swallow, and my blood flowed in time with his flight.

I confess I enjoyed the drive down: how lovely is Nature in anticipation! But my enjoyment of the drive down was as nothing in comparison with my enjoyment of the drive home. Oh, to be in London now that April's there! It was my one thought as Nature grew grimmer and grimmer, and the air grew colder and colder, and I shut the windows and sat down beside the fire and re-read the stories of Mr. Jacobs's night-watchman and tried to forget that I was in the country. I did walk to the top of a hill, but an icy wind was blowing and I came down again. I did see two swallows skimming along the surface of a pond, but they looked so miserable that I hurried back to the house for tea. I heard one willow-wren and thought I had never heard a willow-wren singing so wretchedly. I saw golfers putting in a hailstorm after a thunderclap, and began to understand why some people regard golf as a form of lunacy. . . .

Nature never did betray the heart that loved her? This was not true in April, 1936. Confucius himself would have admitted my right to feel disappointed if he had been where I was. I think he would have approved of my hurrying home on Monday afternoon, swallowing a quick meal in a snack bar, and creeping into the beautiful, stifling air of a cinema to see Jack Hulbert—who never disappoints. Y. Y.

Correspondence

THE FRANCO-SOVIET PACT

SIR,—The British White Paper clearly shows that the Associated Powers (no doubt with perfect legality) took it upon themselves to decide that Germany had broken Article 43 of the Treaty of Versailles, and had violated Locarno. We are perpetually paying lip service to the great principle that nations must not be judges in their own cause, but, as soon as an important question arises, judgment is passed forthwith, and the case is considered too clear for argument. Clause 4 of the White Paper proceeds to invite Germany to lay a case before the International Court with regard to the incompatibility of Locarno and the Franco-Soviet Pact, but why is this matter left to the initiative of Germany? When a person breaks a contract, he is not politely asked to commence proceedings against himself. The proper way to obtain an Advisory Opinion from the Court is for the League Council or Assembly to request the Court to give such an opinion. If we wanted a decision, we could readily get the dispute before the Court, and, if it is objected that Germany would not state her case, the answer is that, so far, we have not taken the proper steps to test this.

These arguments will have little effect on those who do not like third-party judgment, but it is of no avail to try to throw the whole blame on Germany, when we could, and should, send the case to the Court ourselves.

We should, moreover, go very much further than the very restricted question of the legality of the Franco-Soviet Pact. Germany should be sympathetically asked to draw up her own statement of the grounds upon which she has so often said that the whole legal basis of the treaties has now been destroyed by changed circumstances. This is a well-known argument in International Law (known as *rebus sic stantibus*), and was unsuccessfully used by France in recent years in the important case of the Free Zones of Upper Savoy and the District of Gex, and was also referred to by her in the case of the Nationality Decrees in Tunis and Morocco. Whether or not Germany would succeed in her contention is not a matter upon which anyone can pass final judgment, but, if she refuses to allow the League Council to lay these wider issues before the Court, there is no reason why the Council should not themselves do so immediately. Pending the decision, there would be ample scope for negotiation for a constructive settlement. It is essential that we should learn that disputes of this character, where national pride and political prejudice are highly inflamed, must, for the common safety, be laid before the most impartial bodies we can find, and the League machinery for obtaining Advisory Opinions was expressly designed for this end. HECTOR MUNRO

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OIL FROM COAL

SIR,—I will not trespass on your space to discuss with Mr. Ivor Thomas the question of the restoration of coal in British men-of-war

and merchant ships. May I, however, correct one of his statements? He says, "Coal cannot at present be used in any shape or form as a fuel for internal combustion engines." Is Mr. Thomas unaware that throughout the world producer gas, derived from anthracite, coke, or low temperature solid fuel, is being used for the propulsion of motor lorries, tractors and other heavy vehicles?

It is now possible, with complete efficiency, to propel motor vehicles on producer gas at approximately one-eighth of the cost of petrol. I need not emphasise the effect on the coal industry of the full exploitation of producer gas as an alternative to petrol and Diesel oil.

B. ACWORTH
(Captain, R.N.)

Liberty Restoration League,
24 Essex Street, W.C.2.

SIR,—In last week's issue Mr. Tomlinson belittles the possibilities of Low Temperature Carbonisation of Coal. Hydrogenation may ultimately become the economic method of producing large quantities of petrol from coal, but the Navy uses oil, and the future of the internal combustion engine is with oil rather than with petrol. Hydrogenation can never compare with Low Temperature Carbonisation in the economic production of oil.

If anything comparable with the amount of money expended by the I.C.I. on Hydrogenation were employed in Low Temperature Carbonisation by one or more of the processes which have been demonstrated to be commercially sound, a very considerable contribution would be made to the oil requirements of the Country, and the most appropriate kind of assistance would be given to some of the Depressed Areas.

The amount of financial support required to encourage a large extension in this field is insignificant compared with the money provided by Government to foster uneconomic industry such as Beet Sugar. The notorious failures of certain L.T.C. projects have been used to intimidate the investing public—but when the Government is faced with the urgent problems of defence and unemployment, it is difficult to understand its inaction in a matter so vital to the safety and well-being of the country.

Loughborough. WILLIAM PEARSON

EQUAL PAY

SIR,—It is disappointing to find among your Comments on last week's events approbation of Miss Rathbone's red herring drawn across the path to equal pay and its accompanying reforms. As if bachelors without dependants had never existed and as if the underlying principle of equality between the sexes were not so important and so necessary that its non-acceptance lays the entire industrial world open to abuse, brings women into the labour market at rates which beggar the men's chances of employment, and, worst of all, keeps themselves depressed and irresponsible, employed only because they are cheap and ill-protected by their unions.

Family allowances may be an excellent idea, but it has nothing to do with equality and that it should have become even a minor stumbling block in the way of a reform immeasurably greater reflects no credit on its persistent introducer.

Bibury, Cirencester, Glos. ANNE PROTHEROE JONES

THE KENYA AFRICAN'S CONTRIBUTION

SIR,—Since my review of Dr. L. S. B. Leakey's book, *Kenya Contrasts and Problems*, appeared in your issue of March 21st, I have been questioned as to the possibility of the rate of pay for African labour in Kenya's new gold-field being as low as there stated—less than *a half-penny an hour*. The 1934 annual report of the Kenya Department of Mining and Geology, the latest available in this country, gives the average rate of African wages as 8*s*. 11*d*. a month.

The Kenya Government in 1932 passed "an Ordinance (No. XXII of 1932) relating to the Creation of Minimum Wage-fixing Machinery," but it remains a dead letter. It looks well to have such an enactment on the Statute Book; that is all. The measure only becomes operative when applied to any trade or locality by regulation, and down to latest advices from Kenya, none have been issued. So the half-penny wage-rate remains widely prevalent. Since July, 1934, ten Kenya gold-mining flotations have taken place in London to a total par value of over £3,500,000. The total value at issue price was, however, £4,800,000, so a cool million or so has slipped into sundry pockets at the London and Nairobi ends.

The interests of common decency will be served when we have a Government of the Left at Westminster that can be relied upon to clear all these hay-makers in the Kenya sun off the face of the land there, to nationalise such degree of gold-mining activity as it sees fit to maintain in the public interest and for the assistance of African advancement, and to apply the yield of revenue from native gold-bearing areas to African welfare instead of in any further subvention to the white-settlement experiment.

Meanwhile the capitalist concerns that have the undefended African in their grip should be modernised a bit. A minimum wage of 1*s*. a day at the mines with "extras" for work below ground and on night shifts, applied under Ordinance XXII of 1932, would be a partial advance towards the Witwatersrand level. The State duty on gold, mined at to-day's high values, might be swung up from the present almost imbecile figure of 5 per cent. to, say, 25 per cent. Million-pound windfalls for promoters would become less frequent. The gentleman-adventurers might then be left to go ahead with their ventures, presupposing the introduction of employers' liability and workmen's compensation at reasonable scales, until in due course they are removed from the map.

As regards the other windfall to which reference was made, whereby a State subsidy allows the Kenya farmer to rail his maize 540 miles to the sea for 8*s*. 6*d*. a ton, this length of haul was cited as the approximate distance to the coast from the "centre of gravity" of the maize-growing area. Actually the Kenya farmer even 677 miles inland can get his maize down to the port at the 8*s*. 6*d*. rate, as compared with the 63-mile haul enjoyed by the farmer here in England for the same charge.

This concession was made, on December 1st last, only because maize is preponderately a European export. Coffee is almost exclusively another European crop. The railway rate on it was reduced, on the same date, by 33 per cent. On the other hand cotton and cotton seed are almost exclusively an African crop. No reduction of rate was conceded in this case. Thus does the State railway system subsidise the white colonist and, in comparison, bleed the African farmer, building up, in the process, a reserve fund from which the 5*s*. per ton subvention is distributed—mainly into white pockets. Africans did get a 10 per cent. reduction on the cost, previously excessive, of railing cotton-goods up-country from the port of the Colony. This, of course, helps Japanese manufacturers and shippers.

78 Broadway, WILLIAM MCGREGOR ROSS
Letchworth.

A LETTER FROM AUSTRIA

[We publish below extracts from an open letter to the London bus and tram workers from the illegally organised bus and tram workers of Vienna. It has reached this country by a round-about route.]

DEAR FRIENDS AND COMRADES,—When in February, 1934, the cannons and machine-guns of the Fascist Government shot to pieces the civil liberties of the Austrian people, all Free Trade Unions, our Socialist Party and all workers' sports and cultural organisations were dissolved and banned. Our clubs, which we ourselves had built from our funds, were confiscated and their property stolen. But even under martial law, brave and determined workers prepared to sacrifice their lives, and staking personal freedom, worked daily to reconstruct their smashed Trade Unions.

We tramwaymen and busmen of Vienna, too, have rebuilt our organisations. In spite of every form of oppression and persecution, the membership of our Union is 1,140, the number of unemployed men being 12,500. Our members are organised in groups of five in the depots and shops.

Five groups of five members each form an organisational group. The leaders of these organisational groups elect the shop leadership. The shop stewards of each local section elect the local leadership. All the local leaders together constitute the branch leadership, who again elect the leadership of the whole Union.

Because of the need of strengthening our fighting forces as municipal workers, we Vienna bus and tram workers have amalgamated with the illegal organised workers of the electrical power stations and gas works with street, park and sewer cleaners, the lorry-drivers and fire-brigade men. This amalgamation forms a bulwark against the Fascist Municipal Council of Vienna.

Printed under great difficulties, we publish our Trade Union paper, which appears once a month. To maintain and develop the necessary organisational work of our illegal Trade Union, we have to hold several discussions, meetings and conferences each week. These meetings must take place in secret.

Membership of our Union is arbitrarily punished by the police by sentences of three to six months' imprisonment. After these a trial takes place and a further sentence is imposed by the Court. At the end of these terms of imprisonment the accused is sent to a concentration camp for a few months. Activity as an official of a Union is punished by penal servitude for five or even ten years. Like the workers in private enterprises, we public employees are compelled to join the Fascist Union, formed by the Government without the collaboration of the workers. All employees must be members of this compulsory organisation whether they want to be or not. The dues are deducted from wages and amount to about 8*d*. or 1*s*. per month. The officials are appointed by the Fascist Government, without consulting the workers, in fact against their will.

We are not permitted a free election of our representatives or delegates. We are refused the right to hold factory, garage or shop meetings for the discussion of wages and working conditions. Since February, 1934, our wages have been reduced by 18 per cent. These reductions are arbitrarily imposed by the Vienna Municipal Council. Again on February 16th, 1936, our wages were cut by a 7 per cent. reduction of extras. Protests against these arbitrary actions are called unpatriotic and are met with charges of high treason.

After the rising in February, 1934, 265 tram and bus workers were imprisoned. Forty-three others were dismissed from service. The others with their families have to live on the dole which amounts to between 10*s*. and 17*s*. a week. Shortly after February, 35 more were victimised. At the end of November, 1935, a police drive was set in motion on a large scale among the transport workers and 650 were arrested. In spite of hours of cross-examination by the police, the men remained firm and most of them had to be released after five days of arrest, the costs of which they have to pay themselves. Many of our comrades are still in prison.

Neither the difficulties of maintaining the families of our imprisoned and victimised comrades nor the most brutal Fascist terror can discourage us.

We hope to hear from you soon and we greet you in the band greeting of the Austrian workers—" Freedom ! "

From the Illegal Free Trade Union of Municipal and Transport Workers, Tram and Bus Workers Group.

Vienna.

OPTICAL BENEFIT

SIR,—Once again the medical organisation has been called a powerful Trade Union in the House of Commons and the following matter seems to lend some support to the statement.

In the administration of optical benefit the insured person requires a medical certificate before being granted assistance by the Approved Society. When originally framed the regulation was merely a matter of form as the panel practitioner neither pretended to examine nor to know whether the patient needed an optical correction.

Since, however, the medical organisation have formed a " National " optical service of their own, complete with advertising campaign (fear type), the regulation serves a new purpose. The general practitioner is urged to add a short course of ophthalmology and to do the insured work himself. The standard of this work is what can be expected from an overloaded curriculum, but apparently a low standard is good enough if backed by a medical degree —not in ophthalmology.

Although the patient is supposed to have a free choice of optical service and usually chooses examination by a qualified optician, the following are examples of what frequently occurs in practice. (1) The patient is directed to a medical clinic, (2) the doctor does the examination himself, (3) the doctor signs the certificate and his wife may be the specialist recommended, (4) the doctor has an optician visit his consulting room presumably on a share basis, and other examples can be added.

The attention of the Ministry of Health has been drawn repeatedly to the open abuse of the regulation in question which serves no other purpose whatever, but cannot be induced to take any action. The medical profession originally opposed specialisation within their own ranks and it is therefore to be expected that they will oppose specialised service outside their ranks, no matter how much to the public benefit, but surely the Ministry of Health should be a public body and not under medical dictation.

142 Marylebone Road, J. ROSEN
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Miscellany

INTERNATIONALISM IN THE DUCHY

BOARD the train at Paddington, travel a few miles beyond the G.W.R.'s western-most terminus : the international tension which darkens the zenith over London shrinks to the dimensions of a little cloud on the horizon. Thoughts turn to it ; it is the subject of talk now and then in the bar parlour. But here in Cornwall we think and talk much more of wind, weather and sea. These bulk so much larger in our daily life, are fraught with chances of penury and death so much more imminent than fears of European war.

We are a mixed lot in " The Trawler's Arms " at nightfall. Some of the company are " natives," for whom the sea (between pilchard seasons) means spells of three days at a time out of port, shooting and taking in the mile-long lines whose catch may be good saleable skate and ray, or unwelcome tons of profitless dog-fish. Others round the fire are drifter hands, drawn to this Cornish village from East Coast ports in search of the chancy mackerel. But, Cornish or Yorkshire born, all are essentially English. None of the clients of the tap-room has much money in his pocket, and many present are destined to have short lives. The sea is a temperamental mistress and deals hardly with her votaries. For a few days at the beginning of this Spring's mackerel season, some of the drifters had luck. The fish were scarce, the shoals a hundred miles or more westward from Land's End. Auctioned by the six score, mackerel were fetching twenty shillings, or twopence a fish, at market. Those who had fair catches—a small minority of the fleet—did well.

But alas ! for the prodigality of Nature. The sea soon began to yield so many mackerel (80,000 were landed by one drifter in a single trip) that the price, landed, fell to three shillings a long hundred—not enough to pay for bunkers and harbour dues. Faced by what interpreters of the economic system call a glut (we have a better, if coarser, word in " The Trawler's Arms ") the drifters by agreement remained idle in port for the better part of a week. Nor are the local boats doing too well at " lining." The buyers are slow to bid at the quay auctions and catches are small. By the time fuel is paid for, and six-elevenths of the takings have gone (as is customary) to the skipper-owner who provides boat and tackle, there is little enough to be divided in " shares " among the five men who form the normal crew. Cornish fishermen who do not own a boat count themselves lucky if they make £150 in a year. Two pounds a week is a more usual income ; and, let it be borne in mind, a number who bought their pint or two between trips last summer will taste good beer no more. *Pereunt et imputantur*. Drowned and dead, they are written off as a debit item in capitalism's profit and loss account for the merchandising of fish.

Yet, impecunious though we be, and precarious the stake we hold in the stormy shores of a country which, so Lord Rothermere tells us, may soon " need " us again, we have our views and convictions about foreign affairs and international relations.

We are not unanimous. " Old Jim " Penruddle, retired now under stress of the rheumatics from " lining," but still an adept in the setting of 'long-shore lobster pots, has been led by much study of the Book into fatalism. Since Armageddon, he argues, is predestined, he would " sooner have it over than wait, all perplexed and a-tremble." But then Mr. Penruddle is over seventy ; majority opinion is against him. Most of us would have Mr. Eden talk fair with Herr Hitler and keep the peace just as long as ever he can. We are not greatly enamoured of the idea of fighting to maintain the Treaty of Versailles, or even to implement our Locarno engagements. It is not that we are pro-German, still less inclined to approve Herr Hitler's methods or the political philisophy of Nazism. The democracy of the " share " system permeates the atmo-

sphere of "The Trawler's Arms." The truth is that, since the war, Germans have existed for us only as news in the columns of our daily paper. The French we know only too well. Crabbers from Brittany—their brightly painted, brown-sailed smacks decorating our sedate harbour between neap tides—come here each spring to set their pots off the Long-ships' Light.

Despite their name, the Frenchmen are out for lobsters and langoustes. By law they must operate outside the three-mile limit; but in practice, when the moon is newly-born or dying, they are apt to become the victims of illusion and error (let euphemism play its tactful part in these days of delicate inter-national relations). They mistake either their distance from the shore or the identity of laid pots. In short, so local opinion runs, they are unrepentant poachers and thieves.

Retribution sometimes befalls the transgressor. Only last week, with naval ceremony and considerable expenditure of taxpayers' money on bunkers, a fishery protection sloop escorted to our port at nightfall a French crabber caught red-handed two miles from Land's End. Convicted next morning in due form—the prosecutor white-gloved, sword in belt—the poacher was mulcted of a thousand francs and his gear was impounded. Grimly we "natives" watched the fine slowly extracted from the offender's many pockets and handed over to Justice on the quay-side. Unmoved we listened to voluble French expostulations as pots and lines were unloaded by two grinning bluejackets and carted away (Salauds! Vous voulez me couper la gorge parce que je suis francais, nom de Dieu!). Suspiciously we noted how scanty was the gear removed, and how lavishly equipped were the two other Brittany crabbers which had tied up during the night conveniently alongside their arrested (and nominally guarded) compatriot.

As between unknown Germans, whose Government we dislike but who do not invade our territorial waters to filch Cornish lobsters, and Frenchmen who may be fellow-democrats but are certainly, in our opinion, all the sons of Autolycus, our feelings in "The Trawler's Arms" might gratify Lord Beaverbrook. We are so malevolently neutral that we are scarcely distinguishable from isolationists, for all that many of us signed the Peace Ballot. Is the moral, then, that nations should never meet? It is a conclusion repugnant to one good internationalist sojourning in Cornwall. But, like the sea and Mr. Penruddle's fatalism, it has at least the great merit of simplicity.

AYLMER VALLANCE

THE COVENT GARDEN SEASON

THE International Opera season at Covent Garden, which this year opens on Monday, April 27th, is planned on rather more conservative lines than usual, and it is to be hoped that the management is concentrating on presenting a programme which, while less ambitious as to variety and quantity, will be of extremely high quality so as to ensure a thoroughgoing success, artistically and financially. It is a great relief to find that there is no film star advertised in the list of singers engaged this year, since though the appearance of a film star at Covent Garden may astonish the daily newspapers into headlines and may fill the Royal Opera House once with people who have never before seen as much as the outside of it, such visitors are not likely to develop into a permanent audience for opera, and it cannot be too emphatically made clear that Covent Garden Opera House is not a fitting place either for film stars or film fans. The artistic direction of the season is in the hands of Sir Thomas Beecham, and it is for him to raise the standard of operatic performances at Covent Garden as high as is possible. This is his responsibility and not anyone else's, and I think we can trust him to pursue the right policy, for he is an artist and knows what is proper as only an artist can know. But I have to say "as high as is possible" because many music lovers do not realise all the difficulties Sir Thomas Beecham and his associates have to face in preparing a large number of operas for so short a season, lasting only from six to seven weeks. Indeed it would be quite impossible to present all these operas at Covent Garden if it were not for the fact that the singers taking part in them have been already trained and become experienced in their parts in permanent European opera houses. Even so, there is not sufficient time available for rehearsal to get the full development of team-work possible with a permanent company in a permanent opera house. Last year a number of Members of Parliament made themselves ridiculous by writing a letter to the *Times* declaring that it was monstrously unpatriotic that Covent Garden should engage so many foreign singers. Not one of these naive gentlemen, used to the empty idiocies of political propaganding, had ever asked himself the question whether it was not far more monstrous that neither in London nor anywhere else in the British Empire was there a National Theatre or Opera House where British singers might be trained! The fact that musically at Covent Garden we in this country live on the largesse of the Berlin State Opera House, the Vienna State Opera House and the Paris State Opera House (to mention only a few of the subsidised State theatres of Europe!) had never occurred to them. But it is so, and it is futile for our more captious critics to complain bitterly when there are any shortcomings in a Covent Garden production as if Sir Thomas Beecham and his colleagues were not quite as well aware of them as their critics are, but never-theless almost helpless to achieve any further perfection under the present hampering circumstances.

Considerable improvements, notwithstanding these un-favourable conditions, have been made at Covent Garden during the last year or two, and I think that in not embarking on too adventurous a policy this year Sir Thomas Beecham and the management have been wise. They are concentrating on giving two cycles of Wagner's "Ring," and we may expect these to be up to the high standard of the past few years with such proved artists as Frida Leider, Rudolf Bockelmann, Emanuel List, etc., in the cast, while there will be the addi-tional attraction of a new soprano, Kirsten Flagstad, a Norwegian who has made a great success at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, in the cast. Wagner will be the mainstay of this season, for in addition to the "Ring" there are to be performances of *Parsifal*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Tristan und Isolde*, the latter of which will probably be con-ducted by Dr. Wilhelm Furtwängler. I do not think that Furtwängler does anything better than *Tristan*, and it is an excellent idea of Sir Thomas Beecham's to let us hear this famous German conductor's interpretation of Wagner's masterpiece. The only other German opera will be Richard Strauss's popular *Der Rosenkavalier*, and as Lotte Lehmann's name does not appear among the list of singers engaged this year, we shall have the opportunity of hearing somebody else in the role of the Marschallin.

There are to be three Italian operas: Verdi's *Aïda* and *Rigoletto* and Puccini's *Tosca*, and the conductor will be Vincenzo Bellezza, who was here last season. We are prom-ised an entirely new production of *Rigoletto* which, indeed, is badly needed, for this remarkably fine work needs re-discovering by the present generation, having become sterilised by conventional performances. It is also to be hoped that every effort will be made to give a thoroughly adequate production of *Aïda*, which deserves a sympathetic and whole-hearted representation. It is a far better policy for Covent Garden to concentrate on giving a number of first-rate per-formances of *Rigoletto* and *Aïda* than to produce half a dozen Italian operas in a slip-shod way. I am, therefore, very glad to see that the Italian season is restricted to three operas, and I am certain that if they are well done they will be successful in drawing the public, for nothing finer in their respective styles exists than *Aïda* and *Rigoletto*. There are also to be two French operas: *Louise*, a Wagnerian work of indifferent quality, the presence of which in the repertory I personally regret to see, and Offenbach's delightful *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. It is to be hoped that these two French operas are an augury of better things to come in future seasons. It is also fervently to be hoped that the present season will be very successful

financially—and there is every reason from the advanced booking already to expect it will be—because this will enable the management to land out more adventurously in the future. There is a great deal of interesting work that is crying to be done at Covent Garden, given the money to make it possible. There is, for example, far too much Wagner in the present season; the share of this extremely overrated composer is out of all proportion to his merit relative to other composers of opera such as Gluck, Weber and Berlioz. It is time that Weber's *Oberon* and *Euryanthe* were again performed at Covent Garden; Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Alceste*, *Armide*, etc., should also be produced, for these great works are quite unknown to present-day opera audiences. Then Berlioz's two grand operas, *Benvenuto Cellini* and *Les Troyens*, should be put on the Covent Garden stage with a thoroughness worthy of their extraordinary qualities, for there is no question that both these works would appeal to the present generation far more than to the past, since they were about a century ahead of their times. Then there is Busoni's *Dr. Faustus* and a number of other interesting operas such as Darius Milhaud's *Christopher Columbus*, which we ought to be able to hear at Covent Garden. But to mount all these works means a terrific expense, and, therefore, every music-lover should support Covent Garden with a view to enabling Sir Thomas Beecham to be as enterprising as possible in the absence of a National Opera House in this country.

W. J. TURNER

O! COME TO THE STABLE

THE transport, the drivers, grooms and shoeing-smiths, were smart fellows. They wore smartly cut riding-breeches with leather reinforcements at the knees. They wore jingling spurs at their heels and white pipe-clayed lanyards slung around their left shoulders beneath the epaulette. When they "walked out" they tapped their puttees, which they wound from the top downwards instead of from the bottom upwards like the men in the companies, with supple riding-switches. The men in the companies had to wear baggy slacks with their puttees, and carry stiff swagger canes embossed at one end with the regimental crest.

The Transport were more like cavalry than infantry: some of them even wore bandoliers when they went on furlough, which completed the illusion altogether.

They certainly felt themselves to be more like cavalry than infantry, for they sat astride their mules and horses in the rear of the battalion, driving the limbers and G.S. wagons, while the men in the companies plodded wearily mile after mile through dust or mud, according to the season.

They lived apart from the rest of the battalion, in a couple of tents at either end of the horse lines, and had a special marquee where all the saddles, numnahs, chains and traces hung speckless on wooden racks. The marquee had an agreeable smell of leather, wax-polish, fodder and mingled horse and man sweat.

They had their own special call, to which no one else in the battalion could pay heed. It was a call more like that of a cavalry trumpet than an infantry bugle, and when it rang out they used to sing to it:

O! come to the stable
All men who are able,
And water your horses
And give 'em some corn.

Then they would tumble out into the horse lines, and water the mules and the officers' hacks from canvas buckets, and stuff their feed into the nose-bags; or they would strip off their jackets, tie their braces around their waists, and then hissing, comb and brush the animals until their hairy coats shone like glass; or they would put plenty of elbow grease into the leather work, and burnish the steel chains, jingling them one link against the other link in a clean sack, until they glittered like silver.

This special position of being more akin to cavalry than infantry made them more reckless in their conduct than the stolid men in the companies: they were more dashing, more devil-may-care, and occasionally did outrageous things. They had actually, because of their spurs and smartly cut breeches, more luck with the women than the riflemen, and they pressed the advantage home.

The shoeing-smiths, the cold-shoers, had a more difficult job than the others. They earned an extra threepence a day, and were always in and out of hospital. It is no joke shoeing a mule. They were more reckless even than the grooms and drivers.

One of the cold-shoers was a big brawny fellow with tattoo marks all over his body. He was very strong, and would pit his strength openly against a mule's. His mate was a sly, clever little fellow, who overcame his mules by sheer cunning.

The mule that had cast an off fore-shoe was securely hobbled, and the little fellow held it at a safe distance by a thong knotted tightly around the animal's snout. He had such a good grip on it that the mule could not even shriek, but its white eyeballs rolled, and its long ears jerked backwards and forwards viciously. He gave the thong an extra twist for luck.

"Grab the old mophrodite now," he said. The big shoer secured his leather apron around his waist, put the hammer, nails and shoe in the big pocket, and then, crouching like a wrestler, approached his mule. The mule's eyes rolled wickedly, and it lashed out at him with great force with its free off-fore-leg. A mule can kick in any direction. The big shoer missed the kick and then, as the hoof came down, rushed in and grabbed it, wrenching it up between his legs. He crouched there, back to the mule, with its pastern clamped between his knees as though in a vice. The little fellow gave the thong another twist and the mule was helpless.

"No need to throw the brute," grunted the big shoer. He filled his mouth with nails, and gripping the hammer, fitted the shoe to the mule's neat hoof.

When the mule was shod, they went to the little forge and, while the big fellow hammered at the anvil, his mate pumped the cold cinders to a hot white glow. It was Saturday morning. At one o'clock half of the Transport men would be free to "walk out," go square-pushing or boozing, according to their fancy, while the rest—some eight or nine—stayed on duty in the horse-lines. The sun was shining, and the white distant tents sprang from the green meadows like a strange conical fungus.

"A tart wrote to say she was coming to see me to-day," grunted the big man, "but I'm not going to meet her." The blue and red patterns on his arms stretched and shrank with the swell and fall of his muscles.

"Why? Isn't she all right?" The little fellow spoke slyly.

"Yes, she's all right, but I don't want to see her. I told her not to come."

"Where's she coming from?"

"From B——. I met her in hospital there. She's a skivvy there."

"But you said she was all right!" The little shoer glanced slyly at his big mate.

"She was all right, right enough. But I don't want to see her. She's not my fancy. I fancy someone else now."

"She'll have a nice walk here from the station. Two miles and all for nothing when she gets here."

"Serve her right. I told her not to come, anyway."

"What time's she coming?"

"About three o'clock, she says."

The bugle blew for the midday meal, and they squatted on the blankets outside their tents, eating their stew. Soon the whole of the Transport heard that the big shoeing-smith had a girl coming and wasn't going to meet her. After the meal the men who were off duty spruced themselves up and left camp. The others hung about the lines and kept an eye on the mules. One or two of the grooms went out with their officers for a canter around the camp.

The little shoeing-smith went into the marquee and lay face downwards in the hay. He lay quite motionless, listening to his heart-beats.

Presently he got up, sluiced himself in a bucket and strolled down to the camp gates. He hung about there, leaning against the fence, chewing a straw. His eyes closed and he fell into a day-dream.

He heard a shout, and saw the man on picket beckoning him. A girl was standing there. He strolled towards them in a leisurely fashion. The girl wore a blue serge coat and skirt, that had a reddish sheen in it when the sun caught a shiny patch. The black leather button boots that disappeared under the hem of her skirt were thick with white dust. She wore a white cotton blouse with a high neck, and a white feather curling round the brim of a shiny straw hat. Underneath the hat her hair was twisted into a tight bun, and around her shoulders hung a green feather boa that pricked the back of her neck where the feathers had worn away. Her hair was no particular colour at all, like her eyes, and her face was white and thin-featured; but her teeth were good and her hands, despite their redness and roughness, were shaped well. For some reason, she carried an umbrella.

"Here's a pal of his," said the sentry. "He'll tell you."

"Yes, I'm his pal right enough!" The little shoeing-smith grinned and pointed to the badge, a little brass horse-shoe, on his arm. "You can tell by this," he said. The girl peered at it: she was shortsighted.

"Yes," she said, "he wears one like that." After a pause she said, "He knows I was coming. I wrote and told him."

"He knows all right. He told me. I'll take you where he lives."

They walked off slowly together. The girl was tired. The grass began to clean the dust from her shoes up to the ankle, but above the uppers were still white. They walked together down the horse lines, neither speaking. The grooms and drivers watched them closely, but did not speak. They watched the little cold-shoer draw back the flap of the marquee, saw the girl hesitate, and then stoop and enter. The shoeing-smith followed her. The men stared at the marquee and then grinned at one another.

The girl stared at the harness racks.

"Does he live here?" she asked.

"No—but you can wait here for him."

The girl sighed. He walked towards her and said in a hoarse voice: "You're tired. You can sit down over there in the hay."

He led her towards the hay, and she sat upright in the soft sweet haulms, her umbrella at her side.

"Take your hat off," he said. She took out the hatpins and set the hat beside the umbrella. He stood before her with his legs astride.

"He's not coming," he said viciously. "He said he didn't want to see you. He said you weren't his fancy."

Her head drooped forward. After a while she plucked a handful of hay and rubbed the white dust from the uppers of her boots. Then she raised her head:

"Where is he?" she asked in a dull voice.

"He's out with someone else." Her head drooped again. She crossed one leg beneath her as though to rise. A bugle rang out.

"Wait," he said. "That's cookhouse. Tea's up. I'll bring you some. Wait here." Numbly she straightened out her leg.

Outside the men were squatting round a smoking black dixie, brimming with brown tea.

"Give me two mugfuls here," he said. They gave him the tea in silence. As he turned away he said coldly, over his shoulder: "No skylarking. You keep out o' here." He jerked his head towards the marquee. They watched him enter.

When he came out again, they were grouped outside in an uneasy cluster. He did not look at them. He strode down the horse-line and went into his tent. He did not come out again.

Suddenly one of the men broke away and dived quickly into the marquee.

When he came out, another man went in.

They did this until they were all standing again in an uneasy group outside the marquee. They were silent. After a while one of them said:

"I don't think she's got her fare back." They pushed their hands in their pockets and pooled some money.

"Who's going to give it her?" one of them asked.

Again they were silent and uneasy.

"He ought to," said one of the drivers. "He brought her here."

They went off in a body to the shoeing-smith's tent and gave him the money they had collected for the girl's fare. He went into the marquee and came out again. He showed them his empty palms.

After a while the girl came out. She did not look at the men. She walked slowly down the horse-lines towards the gate, her umbrella clutched in one hand, the hot money in the other. As she passed from sight they heard the rollicking notes of their call:

O! come to the stable
All men who are able
And water your horses
And give 'em some corn.

PATRICK KIRWAN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Happy Hypocrite," at His Majesty's

The London theatre does not often give us fantasy, and Mr. Novello is to be congratulated on a courageous step in the direction of the non-commercial venture. The transference of so elusive a quality as that of Mr. Beerbohm's delicate essay to the glare of the footlights has been achieved as regards the text with perfection and the interpolation of two characters, those of Mercury and Amor, has added substance to the plot and invention to the mechanism of this rake's progress; while the performance of Mr. Marius Goring as Amor touches the high-water mark of the acting. Wit, youth and charm are allied here with grace of movement and control of effect. Mr. Novello himself gives the most distinguished performance of his career, particularly before he has assumed his mask, and Mr. Stafford Hilliard as the mask-seller brings that ease of achievement to his character we have learned to expect of him. The ladies are less good. In order of descent, Miss Jeans, beautiful as ever, but lacking in what La Gambogi needs, *panache*; a violin concerto without the cadenza, though her appearance makes up for much. Miss Vivien Leigh's lovely face is admirable for the part of Jenny, but her performance is wooden to a degree, while her dancing talent could be put on a sixpence. Miss Viola Tree is sadly miscast. The freshness of Mr. Beerbohm's vision fades somewhat in the production. The dimming must be laid at the doors of "Motley" and Mr. Addinsell. While in line and invention the decor and dresses are admirable in their suggestion of Prinny's times, in colour they have endeavoured to suggest the "greenery-yallery" period of the original, but no one is further removed from Mr. Beerbohm than Walter Crane. It is always a mistake to endeavour to give an antique appearance to your petit-point seat by working it in faded colours, and while there is a somewhat precious air about Lord George Hell's romance it was on no etiolated hill that Jenny and he took to rusticity. Mr. Addinsell's music bears the melancholy taint of the Vaughan-Williams school and no tee-to-tum could ever whisk up the bubbles in this champagne. But there are many compensations and we wish this venture success.

"Armlet of Jade," at the Westminster

Lord Longford is also occupied with fantasy. His China is Ireland and Yang Kuei-Fei comes from Mullatanny to the tea-parties of Merrion Square. The programme rightly insists that no attempt is made at accuracy, but if so, why place your actors in red eighteenth-century Chinese robes, if you are going to use a set designed by the makers of oxydised silver art jewellery in any Church Street in any Kensington? The romance has to be imagined; for the real Yang Kuei-Fei belonged to the class which is more syndicate than sinning and held her power over the old Emperor by one power and one alone; while the Tartar An Lu-Shan was a stout man with a talent for obscenity far removed from the bounding athlete from some Liffey St.

Polovtsian camp shown in this play. And it is surely time that the Gentlemen of the Far East should stop being made to speak in that language, which a former ambassador to London suppressed once for all by turning to his neighbour, who had been endeavouring to talk to him in it, after having made the speech of the evening in perfect English, and saying, "Likee speechee." The old Emperor was admirably performed by Mr. Robert Hennessey, an actor with a most lovely speaking voice, but Miss Ria Mooney, as Armlet of Jade, was only too conventional, while her phoenix dance consisted of what my old mistress used to refer to as "one, two and a thumper." The play itself has many moments of beautiful language and Lord Longford is obviously a very gifted writer, but the production and the atmosphere smacked too much of the Cadena Café and the more sonorous verses rolled out like the chorus of the old song: "The answer echoed through the hall, we give no bread with one fish-ball."

"Lear," at the Old Vic

This is the best production of *Lear* that has been seen in London for a long time. An excellent cast, adequate scenery (lights, grey steps and tall oblongs making various patterns), and only one interval, before the scene of Gloucester's blinding. The less satisfactory scenes in the play—the division of the kingdom, and the three-storied lunacy of Lear, Edgar and the Fool—come off better than usual. We are made to feel, for example, that at the beginning Lear's jealousy (as hysterical as Othello's) is exaggerated by the pomp of the occasion, while the flattering speeches of Goneril and Regan are perfunctory rather than false. Miss Dorice Fordred and Miss Catherine Lacey suggested admirably by their attitudes a half-bored, half-scornful humouring of the old man. Lear himself (Mr. William Devlin) might at this point have been rather more childishly overbearing and cunning, and less majestic. The hatefulness and tyranny of old age, not the hypocrisy of the young, is what should impress us at the start; so that afterwards Lear's madness shall seem noble by comparison. And that nobility Mr. Devlin admirably captured; he never let the resonance go out of his voice (a feeble Lear would be intolerable), but as he sat between Edgar and the Fool in the cave his lunacy became eerie, and the magnificent speeches afterwards in which Lear accuses a lustful world, picking here a magistrate and there a beldame, were delivered with a real conviction of horror. How vivid and exact, by the way, this phantasmagoria is! Mr. Devlin recognised its essential lucidity, and his actions—drawing a bow, throwing down a gauntlet, pointing an accusing finger—gave the words a natural emphasis. His whole performance, in fact, was a fine piece of acting, and succeeded—better even than Mr. Gielgud's a few years ago—in overcoming the difficulties which every young actor must meet in assuming the part. Of the others, Miss Vivienne Bennett as Cordelia and Mr. Alec Clunes as Edmund were exceptionally good. *Lear* is Mr. Henry Cass's last Shakespearean production at the Old Vic this season, and altogether it is his best.

A Canadian Centenarian

Grandmother Whiteoak is a hundred and one years old. She lives at Jalna which belongs to her Grandson Renny who entertains there his two Uncles, Ernest and Nicholas, his Aunt Augusta, his brothers Piers and Finch, young Wakefield—a revolting little boy, a handsome parrot, some dogs and some horses which were only heard of, off. Jalna does not pay and Renny is often, as Finch tells Grandmother, at his wits' end for money. She has money. To whom shall she leave it? Finch, the ugly duckling, the musician, the butt of the hearties, gets it, and in the last act of *Whiteoaks*, Miss de la Roche's dramatic version of her novel, at the Little Theatre, is to be seen one of the best post-reading-the-will domestic rows that have ever been staged. The earlier acts have been devoted to a portrait of Grandmother, and her denunciation of the family. Nancy Price gave a fiercely drawn performance; at moments one wished for a little more subtlety, but the character gives small scope for it, though there was shrewd tenderness in the scene where she discusses her plans with Finch, admirably played by Stephen Haggard. The cast is exceptionally good and the acting could hardly be bettered — Robert Newton's Renny was an exquisite piece of work. He was the calm at the heart of the thunderstorm, but a calm which suggested its own capacity for thunder. That lovely actress Jill Furse had too little to do as Piers's wife, while Elizabeth Maude made the best of the unsympathetic Margaret. The production by Nancy Price and Frank Birch was a lesson in stage-craft by which more pretentious regisseurs might very well profit. Those who can bear home-life presented with all the rigour of the game will certainly enjoy *Whiteoaks*.

Nelson at the Embassy

Neither Mr. Edgar Middleton, the author, nor Mr. Walter Hudd, the player, is to be blamed for failing to create a credible Nelson in *England Expects—?* at the Embassy. He remains, with Shakespeare, one of the major improbabilities of English history, and the more faithfully the known facts are presented the less convincing becomes the final portrait. Indeed at this time of day a "historically accurate" presentation all too easily becomes a dummy stuffed with clichés, and therefore inexcusable. In so far as Mr. Middleton has a thesis to propound, it is that England expects her heroes to lead respectable private lives, or at all events feels that they ought to; and this is a poor sort of revelation to last three acts, especially when the first of them is so unutterably pedestrian. Mr. Hudd adopts a dry cynicism of intonation which embarrasses him badly when he had to express the fervent emotionalism which must be included in the picture. The love scenes with Lady Hamilton, in particular, provide some exceedingly uncomfortable moments for everybody, while the cock-pit scene, even when Nelson receives a prophetic vision of Emma being dragged to a debtor's prison, is painfully flat. Elsewhere, in the casting off of Lady Nelson, in the conferences with his captains and in a well-conceived interview with the First Sea Lord, Mr. Hudd is more at ease and manages to suggest a dynamic force in the frail body. Miss Margaretta Scott tries hard as Emma, but, lacking encouragement from the author, fails to be interesting except in her final scene. Mr. Max Adrian, in one short scene scores with smooth brilliance as the King's private secretary.

"Follow the Fleet," at the Plaza

Everything in this film, except the two principals and a diminutive monkey, is on a big scale. With the typical lavishness of naval estimates, to raise $700 Astaire and his fellow-seamen stage a slap-up show which must have cost three times that sum. The scene of this object-lesson in spending for prosperity is a palatial clipper, readily salvaged and reconditioned. A ten-cent dive makes the average *boîte* look like a discarded shoe-box, and a poor little music-teacher's apartment flows with silk and money. Against these backgrounds the narrative and the padding of the film show up pretty thin, and the intervals between the dances of Astaire and Ginger Rogers are just intervals. Both the lyrics Harriet Hilliard sings are feeble and foolish to the point of distraction. She looks distracted, but that doesn't help. Three of the dances and half a dozen of the wisecracks are up to standard —and though it's a very high standard for the dancing, that leaves *Follow the Fleet* on a par with *Roberta*, the least polished of these Rogers-Astaire entertainments. He himself, a human Mickey Mouse, is the most accomplished dancer outside ballet; he makes choreographic inanities supple, subtle and exhilarating, and the grace and intelligence of his work even in tap-dancing leaves the expert Eleanor Powell rattling vigorously and monotonously away into the distance like a goods-train.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, April 17th—
- Exhibition on Working Class Housing, 13, Suffolk Street, 11.30—9. Till May 6.
- "Waiting for Lefty," Unity Theatre Club, Britannia Street, King's Cross.

SATURDAY, April 18th—
- "End of St. Petersburg," Transport House, Smith Square.

SUNDAY, April 19th—
- S. K. Ratcliffe on "America and the European Crisis," Conway Hall, 11.
- London Film Institute Society. New documentary films and revival of "The Front Page," Forum Cinema, 2.30.
- Michael Best on "Barriers in the Way of Housing the People," Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, 7.30.

MONDAY, April 20th—
- "Last Voyage," Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich.

TUESDAY, April 21st—
- Brig.-Gen. F. P. Crozier on "The Significance of the Sheppard Peace Pledge," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.
- Peter Fleming on "A Journey in Central Asia," Cowdray Hall, Henrietta Street, 8.30.
- "The Great Experiment," St. Martin's Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, April 22nd—
- "The Future That Was," Ambassador's Theatre.

FRIDAY, April 24th—
- University Labour Federation Monthly Supper. Dr. Hugh Dalton on "Foreign Affairs," National Trade Union Club, 24 New Oxford Street, 7.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

In material objects brilliance has often a connection with surface; this does not hold true of ideas where brilliance implies the capacities of the diver able to fetch up pearls from the sea-floor rather than those of the boot-black with dextrous command of spit and polish. In spite of this obvious consideration, brilliance and surface commonly remain associated and usually the first rule of the man who aims at brilliance in conversation, or in writing, is not to plunge deep. Yet he can never be even interesting unless he does. The belief that a superficial view is more amusing and interesting than a profound one is the vice peculiar to half-educated people and is almost universal amongst them. If posterity should be generally better educated than we are (a supposition which in all ages has appeared improbable and never more so than to-day) it may well regard this vice as our especial badge, infecting every branch of our literature and making the greater part of it unreadable. The vice is, I believe, almost as fatal in fiction as philosophy, but it shows itself most obviously in biography; how common it is, only becomes apparent when one reads a book entirely free from it. *A Flame in Sunlight, The Life and Work of Thomas De Quincey* by Edward Sackville West (Cassell, 15*s*.) is unlike most biographies written to-day. It is serious and critical and shows a profound understanding of, and absorption in, its subject. As a result it is extremely interesting; a book which will be read with attention so long as people are interested in the English Opium-eater. The most striking characteristic of the book is its author's good sense. This is one of the rarest qualifications in judging other people's lives and interpreting their conduct, but without it all others lose their value. Such merits are particularly difficult to illustrate in a review, for they rest not on the presentation of a number of details but on sympathy, understanding and the balance of the whole book, incompressible virtues.

* * *

The course of De Quincey's life was decided when he ran away from school and then, although his family agreed to allow him a pound a week, went into hiding first in Wales and then in London, and endured the most terrible starvation rather than let them know his whereabouts. The reason for this is a mystery. Mr. Sackville West offers an explanation. Just before his flight from school he received a letter addressed to Monsieur De Quincey, containing a cheque for forty pounds. The boy realised it was not for him, but he kept it, though he did not cash it, and he tells a strange story of handing it to an unknown woman to return to the Post Office. Mr. Sackville West suggests that there was no such woman and that De Quincey kept the cheque too long, until he realised that he could not confess to its possession without being suspected of dishonesty. There is a good deal of evidence for this, the most important of which is that, when De Quincey came of age, he had to pay £150 in connection with the affair. The only argument I can see against this explanation is that De Quincey's brother "Pink" also ran away from school, went to sea, was captured by pirates and, after eventually returning, behaved in an even more mysterious manner, hiding from his family, although no cheque to an unknown De Quincey was involved. What little we know of "Pink" makes him appear even more fascinating than his brother. Mr. Sackville West tells us that he had an enthusiasm for pictures and that he is reported to have been killed, at the age of twenty-six, by wild beasts in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. It may be worth while my pointing out that *there are no "wild beasts" dangerous to man in Jamaica, except the crocodile.* Is it too fanciful to suggest that the crocodile which devoured "Pink" figured in the worst of De Quincey's opium dreams?

> The cursed crocodile became to me the object of more horror than all the rest. I was compelled to live with him; and (as was always the case in my dreams) for centuries . . . the abominable head of the crocodile, and his leering eyes, looked out at me, multiplied with ten thousand repetitions; and I stood loathing and fascinated. So often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams that, etc. . . .

If it is De Quincey who speaks of his brother's being killed by "wild beasts," perhaps it is because he could not bear to name his special enemy in this connection.

* * *

Mr. Sackville West might also have pointed out that the first flight bears a close resemblance to the "moral collapse" which prevented De Quincey from appearing at the second day's examination for his degree at Oxford after he had acquitted himself brilliantly on the first, and with the abortive attempts to make himself known to Wordsworth.

> twice did I advance as far as the lake of Coniston . . . catching one glimpse of this loveliest of landscapes, I retreated like a guilty thing, for fear I might be surprised by Wordsworth. . . .

Whatever its cause, the period of hiding produced the most indelible impressions of his life; it inspired him with the poetry of youth and poverty and suffering in London, all that is called up by the sound of a barrel-organ and ragged children dancing in the black rain, by the words *Oxford Street, stony-hearted step-mother,* by the sight of a young prostitute crossing the road carrying a glass of port-wine, or of the rat-ridden house at the corner of Greek Street and Soho Square. The sufferings of those few months, spiritual and physical, changed De Quincey forever and, followed by his unfortunate habits of life at Oxford, disposed him to fall a victim to opium directly he was introduced to it. Mr. Sackville West rightly draws a distinction between the attitude to the drug of De Quincey and of Baudelaire, who paraphrased *The Confessions* in *Les Paradis Artificiels.*

> Baudelaire taking the view succinctly expressed by his general title, while De Quincey took opium primarily as a pain-killer and to the end regarded his dream experiences as a secondary product.

Perhaps the real distinction lies in the *artificiels.* The quart of ruby-coloured laudanum in the decanter on the cottage table was part of De Quincey's paradise but was not invested with any false glamour of decadence.

* * *

Mr. Sackville West's good sense as a biographer is particularly marked when he deals with Wordsworth's refusal to continue on intimate terms with De Quincey after his marriage to a farmer's daughter with whom he had been living in sin, although Wordsworth had behaved in an exactly similar manner twenty-five years before. "We must beware of judging him by standards which not only he himself but the whole society of his day, would have considered quite inadmissible." Moreover there was another side to the estrangement, for it was just before this that De Quincey had begun to drug heavily and the Wordsworths had had a "dismal experience with Coleridge."

> "For Heaven's sake, let us have no more drug-addicts!" Some such thought must have occurred very forcibly in all their minds and those who have any experience of drug-addicts will scarcely blame them.

Nine years later, when De Quincey had been able, miraculously, to disintoxicate himself, he wrote a moving appeal in a letter to Dorothy Wordsworth, here published for the first time, entreating her to call upon his wife and cheer her during his enforced absence in London, and a letter, a year later, from Dorothy shows that she was visiting Mrs. De Quincey. The latter part of the book contains a detailed critical estimate which has the virtue of recognising De Quincey's bad qualities as a writer as well as his good, and his limitations both intellectual and emotional. Mr. Sackville West never makes his subject an excuse for a display of fine writing; his style is serious, and direct; the following passage describing lakeland scenery shows his command of beauty:

> In concentric rings, fitted with the nicety of Chinese boxes and coloured with the gradual shades of England, the black peaks of the mountains modulate into the tawny colours of the upper pastureland, down through belts of ash and fir and rank bracken, to the vivid green of the lower fields, the luxurious tints of oak and beech, and, at

last—like a plain jewel in an elaborate mount—the oval lake itself, with its "ark-like" island. . . . It was this compendiousness—this giving of easy and rapid access to all the moods of nature, so that a man can pass, in the space of an hour or two's walk, from Alpine gloom, solitude and danger, to the clustered bird-song, the dappled gaiety and safety of a landscape garden—which inspired Wordsworth's poetry with that quality of comprehensive reverence, and gave so lively a satisfaction to the imagination of De Quincey. This construction of the lakeland landscape finds a curious parallel in De Quincey's dreams, which are similarly "ringed"—the outer confines being those of terror and despair, while, as we approach the centre, warmth and the graciousness of tender memories similarly supervene.

Let us end, as we began, with a moral judgment. Mr. Sackville West has succeeded brilliantly, because he was not content to look at the Opium-eater intelligently "with a fresh eye," but ready to plunge deep into his subject, study it profoundly and live with it for a long time. DAVID GARNETT

MR. T. S. ELIOT

Collected Poems. 1909-1935. By T. S. ELIOT. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.
Essays Ancient and Modern. By T. S. ELIOT. *Faber.* 6s.

Were a bibliography to be composed of the various critical studies that have been devoted to Mr. T. S. Eliot during the last ten or fifteen years, it would make up a fairly considerable volume. For almost every modern critic has had his say. There are, indeed, very few literary undergraduates who have not, at one time or another, voiced their appreciation of his poems; and, even in the Far East, solemn spectacled faces are earnestly bent, and round shaven skulls dolorously scratched, over *The Waste Land*, *Prufrock* or *Ash-Wednesday*. At Oxford, ten years ago, admiration of *The Waste Land* had given rise to a new and, now and then, extremely tiresome form of intellectual snobism. The intelligentsia were as knowledgeable and talkative about the relationship and precise significance of Mr. Ionides and Phlebas the Phoenician as their Bullingdon equivalent about the genealogical complications of the Stud Book; *La Figlia Che Piange* provided the *leit-motif* of a dozen adolescent love-affairs. And yet, although the mass of writing around Mr. T. S. Eliot is by now probably much more voluminous than the whole corpus of his published verse and prose, it is still possible to retrace one's steps through his poems, experiencing as one reads a continuous movement of pleasure, interest and surprise. Perhaps surprise is the final criterion of poetic excellence. However hackneyed it may have become, no poem of real quality can quite lose the power of administering that kind of salutary emotional shock which, if only for a few minutes, possesses the brain and shows us the familiar universe in a refreshing light. *Collected Poems* embraces Mr. T. S. Eliot's entire poetic output between 1909 and 1935. It covers the same ground as *Poems*, published several years back, but includes *Ash-Wednesday*, four poems published in the Ariel Series, a quantity of minor and unfinished work, as well as a new and remarkably accomplished poem, *Burnt Norton*.

Here is a panorama of Mr. Eliot's poetic achievement. Beginning with the section headed *Prufrock*, 1917, one is at first startled by the brilliance and liveliness of those early poems—we know them so well; yet, even to-day, how well they stand re-reading!—then a little puzzled and disconcerted because, although certain elements in *Prufrock* have continued to develop until we reach the uncommon rhythmic virtuosity of *Burnt Norton* (written nearly twenty years later) they contain another element that has very largely disappeared. In *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, Mr. Eliot displays a gaiety, energy and satirical versatility that he has long since discarded. The influence of Jules Laforgue is extremely strong; but this is a Laforgue with additions and, I think, at least from the Anglo-Saxon point of view, very definite improvements. He has Laforgue's wit and dexterity without his fragility—Laforgue's skill without the touch of flatness and thinness that gives so many of Laforgue's *vers libre* essays a slightly consumptive and debilitated air. For there is a background of something we can best describe as *gusto*—a sense of enjoyment that may co-exist with a knowledge of human suffering, a love of life not incompatible with the horror of humanity; and from more recent works that element of gusto proved strangely lacking. The *peur de vivre* had broken down his poetic defences; the poet was in full retreat through *The Waste Land*.

Having entered it, he was obliged to find an issue. If the influence of Laforgue had done much to shape *Prufrock* and *Poems*, 1920, even to the extent of suggesting images, lines and whole passages, Baudelaire (with Tristan Corbière as a secondary influence) was the presiding spirit of that extraordinary poem which burst, like an organ cactus dominating an herbaceous border, from among the pleasant flower-beds and meandering grass-walks of Georgian poetry. But now compare the methods of master and disciple. When I ventured to observe that Eliot lacked gusto, I did not, of course, mean to complain that he lacked optimism, that he was a perverse and atrabilious highbrow malcontent. No poet has ever expressed a deeper or more unrelieved despair, a more uncompromising and embittered attitude towards contemporary society, than the author of *Les Fleurs du Mal*. And yet how solid, sensuous and—in spite of condemnation, disgust and disenchantment—how almost *appreciative* is his rendering of the real world! The nightmare metropolis of *Tableaux Parisiens* reveals a depth of light and shade, hints at a beauty, cruelty and oddity, that evoke the mingled squalor and splendour of a modern industrial city, as they have been evoked by no other poet or novelist. Nineteenth-century Paris, with the old struggling against the new, as Haussmann ploughed his way, amid dust and rubble, through the labyrinth of ancient quarters, was a city full of phantoms and stalking memories:

> Fourmillante cité, cité pleine de rêves,
> Où le spectre en plein jour raccroche le passant . . .

There was no end to the emotions of wonder and horror that it aroused; it was intensely real to the poet, even though its reality may have been intensely unpleasing; whereas the landscape of twentieth-century London, glimpsed in *The Waste Land*, seems, by comparison, as drab, low-toned and shadowily inconsequent as the stream of spiritless human automata trudging to their work over London Bridge:

> Unreal City,
> Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
> A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
> I had not thought death had undone so many.
> Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
> And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
> Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
> To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
> With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.

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For Mr. Eliot shares the malady of his epoch; and that malady —at any rate, among intellectuals—comes not so much from a positive misdirection of energy as from a mere lack of vitality, not so much from any failure of sensitiveness as from a general lowering of temperature that leaves us face to face with a world where the good is flavourless, the bad insignificant, where our values, slowly and quietly, seem to be crumbling away to form part of a general desert-level of indifference and ill-will. Such is the predominant mood of *The Waste Land*. And a historian of the future may find that the poem affords him interesting material for a study of the period, noting, moreover, that when Mr. Eliot escaped from the wilderness he did so by taking refuge in a narrow and sectarian, but evidently absorbing and satisfying, faith, and that, under the influence of this new faith, he was to achieve some of his most exquisite and finely balanced later poems. We may regret that the gaiety and gusto of *Prufrock* should already have begun to disappear in *The Waste Land*; and we may regret that, on emerging from *The Waste Land*, he should have limited himself to a smaller poetic field; but a poet, after all, can only progress along the lines that his individual temperament lays down; and, by remaining faithful to his temperament—one of Protestant and transatlantic puritanism, exasperated by contact with an alien culture—Mr. Eliot has continued to perfect his gift. *Collected Poems*, then, is a valuable and fascinating book because it gives a bird's-eye view of his poetic progress, from his early, brilliant but derivative excursions, right up to the present day. It is particularly interesting, for example, to see the admirable choruses of *The Rock* divorced from their somewhat less stimulating context, and to be able to trace Mr. Eliot's link with the main tradition of English devotional verse. About the poems in *Ash-Wednesday* there was an occasional touch of almost pre-Raphaelite prettiness; and, personally, I prefer the choruses; since Mr. Eliot must be numbered among the very few modern poets who have learned to combine eloquence and simplicity of statement with a feeling for poetic expression in its more allusive form:

> A Cry from the North, from the West and from the South
> Whence thousands travel daily to the timekept City;
> Where My Word is unspoken,
> In the land of lobelias and tennis flannels
> The rabbit shall burrow and the thorn revisit,
> The nettle shall flourish on the gravel court,
> And the wind shall say: "Here were decent godless people:
> Their only monument the asphalt road
> And a thousand lost golf balls."

Nor is *Burnt Norton* disappointing. In harmony and flexibility it is the equal of Mr. Eliot's earlier poems; and, though the first section opens in a style rather too reminiscent of the text-book:

> Time present and time past
> Are both perhaps present in time future,
> And time future contained in time past.
> If all time is eternally present
> All time is unredeemable.

it closes with a long passage of remarkable felicity, to which quotation and abbreviation do less than justice:

> What might have been and what has been
> Point to one end, which is always present.
> Footfalls echo in the memory
> Down the passage which we did not take
> Towards the door we never opened
> Into the rose-garden. My words echo
> Thus, in your mind . . .
> Other echoes
> Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow?
> Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,
> Round the corner. Through the first gate,
> Into our first world, shall we follow
> The deception of the thrush? Into our first world.
> There they were, dignified, invisible,
> Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves,
> In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air,
> And the bird called, in response to
> The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,
> And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses
> Had the look of flowers that are looked at . . .
> Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children,
> Hidden excitedly, containing laughter.
> Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind
> Cannot bear very much reality.
> Time past and time future
> What might have been and what has been
> Point to one end, which is always present.

But, if the acquisition of faith has added to the delicacy—while detracting, I believe, from the breadth and variety—of Mr. Eliot's poetic method, it has had another effect on his discursive and critical work. *The Sacred Wood* and *Homage to John Dryden*, though often abused by academic journalists, were among the most exciting and illuminating critical products of their time. *For Lancelot Andrewes*, which contained a suggestion that Andrewes was a finer stylist than John Donne (apparently because he was the more orthodox theologian) struck a sad shock through the heart of many a hopeful reader, who expected something as good as Mr. Eliot's essays on the Elizabethan dramatists and seventeenth-century poets. *Essays Ancient and Modern* is *Lancelot Andrewes* revised, corrected and brought up to date. The all-too-famous foreword—plumping for classicism in literature, royalism in politics and Anglo-catholicism in religion—is now judged to have served its purpose and has been removed. Studies of Machiavelli and Crashaw, which their author considers unsatisfactory, have also been deleted; while a paper on Middleton does not appear since it has found a place in *Elizabethan Essays*. To fill the gap, we have two articles written round religious or semi-religious themes, *Religion and Literature* and *Catholicism and International Order*, an essay—sound, but not particularly exciting—entitled *Modern Education and the Classics*, an introduction to *The "Pensées" of Pascal* (in which Mr. Eliot explains the dangerous fascination of Montaigne by comparing that unfortunate sage to "a fog, a gas, a fluid, insidious element") and a note, in his best manner, on the poetry of Tennyson. Here the critic uses only aesthetic arguments; and the result is wise, sensitive and brilliantly expounded.

PETER QUENNELL

LEVY ON LOGIC

Thinking. By PROFESSOR H. LEVY. *Newnes.* 5s.

Logic is an unfashionable subject nowadays. In the preface to his new book Professor Levy fights shy of the name and seems to imply that he is concerned with psychology. It is to be hoped that no one will be misled by this, for *Thinking* is a handbook of Marxian methodology with the Hegelian paraphernalia discreetly omitted. It is in fact an attempt to construct a Logic of the Social Sciences, and nothing is more urgently needed.

The problem can be expressed quite simply. Can we make the social sciences truly scientific without at the same time introducing a determinism which contradicts our everyday experience of free-will? Professor Levy suggests that we can do so by modifying, on the one hand, the scientific concept of necessity, and on the other, the Liberal notion of free-will. He tries, in fact, to show that while nature does not "obey" mechanical laws, human beings are not entirely free to do as they choose, and he hopes in this way to line up the social sciences with the natural sciences by showing that any sharp distinction between freedom and necessity is unfounded. This first part of the argument is excellently done.

The second part, however, is not so satisfactory. Professor Levy seeks to show that the test of all scientific truth is *Use* and writes (page 112): "Conviction (of the truth of the statement that common salt when treated with sulphuric acid gives hydrochloric acid) comes with even greater force when the statement is used to design an industrial plant." Surely this is nonsense. The scientist is not convinced by Lord Melchett's activities, and Lord Melchett is not directly concerned with truth. There is no unity of theory and practice along these lines.

The ambiguity is, of course, in the word "use." Prediction is used for testing a theory, but such prediction may be of no practical use whatsoever. Truth may be useless and falsehood may be useful, and for this reason "the Unity of Theory and Practice" is either blatantly false or merely accidental. But there is a second even more fundamental difficulty in Professor Levy's account of the central theme of Marxist philosophy. Admitted that the test of scientific truth is its verifiability by means of experiment and prediction, can we show social science to be truly scientific? Professor Levy thinks we can, although it is obvious that in studying society we can rarely control our experiments or repeat them or isolate the factors we wish to examine. He writes as follows: "A human being may venture on a prediction concerning his own behaviour and will set about making it come true. . . . Because he is at a higher level of development than the moon, he can be his own scientist and his own material for study . . . he can become a conscious maker of laws." But this is to make confusion worse confounded. If the moon set about making Professor Levy's predictions come true, could Professor Levy still make scientific predictions about

it? And do human beings often spend their time predicting their behaviour and then making their predictions come true? Of course not, unless they are professional boxers with a good deal of money on the result of the match. Human beings try to realise their purposes and that is not the same as making their predictions come true. Professor Levy avoids facing this issue by confusing experiment as the test of truth with experience as the test of satisfaction: and so he can suggest that we should be able to judge any political plan as we should judge a scientific experiment. But Lenin was not simply testing experimentally the truth of Marx's theories. The sufferings of the Russian Revolution were not part of a process of human vivisection, but of an attempt to free men from their chains. There is no scientific test of the satisfactions of freedom.

It is at this point that the third and worst confusion in Professor Levy's argument occurs. Assuming, harmlessly enough, that all action is directed to the attainment of *satisfaction*, he glides imperceptibly into the old Utilitarian mistake of confusing satisfaction with Use. "Man's purpose," he writes, "is consciously to reap the fruits of the earth for his benefit." And then he goes on to write about politics as if the production and distribution of wealth was the only motive of man in society. It may be true that all political problems are at bottom economic, but it is not true that all political purposes are economic. When I claim that a proposal is unfair or dishonourable or inhumane, I am introducing value judgments concerned, perhaps, with the distribution of wealth, but not themselves economic in character. The fulfilment of any purpose will bring me satisfaction, but it may not bring me economic satisfaction. I may prefer truth to riches, or riches to honour, and it is with decisions of this sort that politics is concerned.

For this reason the social scientist cannot unify theory and practice. He can only observe the behaviour of men in society and test his observations as far as possible by experiment and prediction. In that case his purpose is Truth, not Use. He can, if he wishes, go on to apply his observations in seeking to create that type of social order of which he approves. In that case he is no longer a scientist, but a politician making use of science for political ends. The consideration of the desirability of those ends is the task both of the philosopher and the elector, but it is not a scientific consideration at all, and cannot be tested by experiment or prediction.

Thinking is a thoroughly stimulating book and its confusions are partly due to the difficulty of the subject. But I suspect it has been written very fast and on pages 11, 102, 160, 172 and 216 I am still uncertain whether the obscurity is due to the content, the style or the proof reading. R. H. S. CROSSMAN

IS FREUD NECESSARY?

Psycho-Analysis and Social Psychology. By WILLIAM MCDOUGALL. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.

It is a great pity that Rabelais is dead. Nobody since has been able to keep up with all the theological and scientific disputes without becoming somebody's disciple or otherwise losing their nerve. When that unlearned worm the average reader blunders into the fields of psychology and anthropology where ignorant armies clash by night he is liable to be badly battered by knock-down arguments gloriously wielded by both sides. Messrs. Thurber and White did great work for peace and sanity in 1930 by asking "Is Sex Necessary?" but the international situation has grown much worse since then.

It would be easy to dismiss this criticism of Freud as the jealous carping of a less successful prophet. Professor McDougall is a little ingenuous in his assertions that he was the first discoverer of fundamental principles in the only true psychology which Freud is slowly coming to adopt without acknowledgment. He is rather malicious about Freud's various recantations and shows excessive glee in pointing out the damage which they may do to the fabric of psycho-analytical theory. Pantagruelists will note that this book is very rude to Freudians, Adlerians, followers of Jung, the psychologists of Columbia University and medical men in general. Professor McDougall's prejudices are clear cut. He dislikes hedonism, materialism, determinism, and irreligion. He believes that post-war promiscuity and the dominance of the "waster mind" are responsible for much of our present economic discontent. He is a Lamarckian. He disbelieves Freud's father-leader family-herd theory, and seems to dislike its political implications. This is a fearsome list of prejudices likely to prevent scientific detachment, but an equally dangerous complemental list could be provided for Freud.

Instincts or innate dispositions have not been worn for some years now, but there have been signs that Freud was leaving behind his one-piece, omnipotent, Oedipus-complicated libido and returning to them again. McDougall arranges for us a pleasant historical mannequin parade of latest models from the house of Freud.

Social, group, or herd psychology is one of the most exciting and least satisfactory sections of the science. Neither McDougall nor Trotter nor Freud help the ordinary reader much in understanding it. In this book McDougall's theory of suggestion, emotional contagion, and submissive instinct is wittily restated but the best available explanation of panic still seems to be that it is the work of the great god Pan.

It is claimed that Freud has admitted that the Oedipus complex has no existence in normal adolescents and adults, but still unreasonably assumes it be universal in infants. As the castration threat is claimed to be a necessary force in dissolving the omnipresent Oedipus complex McDougall points out that "it becomes a moral obligation on every father to threaten to castrate his little son." The book is full of this kind of *reductio ad absurdum* and indeed contains almost as much logic as bad temper.

Professor McDougall is writing a history of psychology. This is an admirable discipline for psychologists, and one is glad to see that Professor Flugel, who has undergone it, is treated more kindly than the other Freudians considered here. In his forthcoming history McDougall must, however, correct his statement that the late Dr. Suttie was a Freudian. *The Origins of Love and Hate* disproves that completely. It is probable that some injustice has been done to the psychologists of Vienna in this book, but it cannot be denied that schools of psychologists are less willing to give other schools any credit than almost any other bodies of scientists. The grievances so thoroughly aired here may be just.

Professor McDougall attributes the non-existence of any generally-agreed-upon body of psychological knowledge to the poverty of the intellectual powers of our generation. Mourn you viedazes, jobbernols, and joltheads! Mourn for the death of Doctor François Rabelais. FREDERICK LAWS

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Alexander and Angling. By R. SINCLAIR CARR. *Chatto and Windus.* 7s. 6d.

The County of Sussex. By HILAIRE BELLOC. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.

Seas and Shores of England. By EDMUND VALE. *Batsford.* 7s. 6d.

The angling book of Mr. Sinclair Carr (otherwise known as "Salfario") makes very entertaining reading. Perhaps more entertaining than informative, though no good angling book can be otherwise than both. Old wet-fly hands will have little to learn from him, save to laugh and chuckle if they are too hard-bitten by North-Country dourness. Most of the book is aggressively funny, very sketchy too, jolly little black and white drawings (by Roy Beddington), scores of them, all over the Cheviot-shadowed pages; and the fifty stories and written sketches, which are rarely more than two and a half pages long, scintillating pictures to excite and tickle the piscatorial sense. Alexander, whom much of the book is about, is a Border river-watcher, a gorgeous combination of poacher and officer-of-the-law. Not that he isn't a good sportsman and a hard hammer against male-factors, but his conscience as regards himself is a little elastic and self-indulgent, particularly when he wants to help a valuable friend. So that it isn't surprising to hear that he breaks the Scotch law by going fishing on the "Sawbath," and even secures a good bag of trout by tickling them.

He knows all about everything. So does Mr. Sinclair Carr, though he seems rather limited to the Solway streams. Brown-trout, sea-trout and salmon—they are all there, kicking, rushing, sulking, leaping into the air, sawing the line against rocks, and twisting it round water-weeds. The brown-trout seem somewhat large for North-Country streams, but doubtless Mr. Sinclair Carr conveniently forgets more than half his experiences with the little ones. Very refreshingly, too, he seems to prefer wet-fly fishing to dry-fly, but makes some curious statements. For instance:

> In the early summer I watched the efforts of some quite good wet-fly fishers with natural stone fly. They fished it badly—very badly. It was not surprising. They had never mastered dry-fly fishing. Until they do, it is surely not to be expected that they can fish a natural fly successfully and well.

Is Mr. Carr being caught tripping, or am I? It is, at any rate, difficult to imagine how the switch, switch, switch method of dry-fly can be transferred to natural fly without flicking the insect off the hook. So many who have tried it have no good tale to tell, and most of the successful North-Country natural fly-fishers of my youth were adepts at the wet artificial and knew nothing about dry artificial. But the subject, until a few years ago, was an exceedingly sanguinary one, and caused nearly as much blood-letting as discussions over the respective merits of "modernist" and Victorian poetry. It is still rather dangerous ground to tread on; but times have, nevertheless, changed, and the wet-fly fisher of the North is no longer regarded by his Southern brother as a boor, nor he in his turn as a swank and peacock angler. So many North-Country fishers now successfully sandwich the dry-fly with the wet; but discreet Mr. Sinclair Carr will give some readers the uncomfortable feeling that he is trying to make friends with what he perhaps regards as the ascendant mammon of unrighteousness, and that he had better stick to his sinking "Spiders" and February Reds—and his delicious jokes.

It is, however, hardly likely that he will want to make friends with Mr. Hilaire Belloc, who some years ago somewhat disparaged the North Country at the expense of Sussex:

> The men that live in North England
> I saw them for a day:
> Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
> Their skies are fast and grey.

And now he gives us a book on Sussex which almost sounds like a cross between Caesar's *Gallic War* and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. In comparison with Sinclair Carr, Mr. Belloc is an austere Old Roman, and the fine poet in him is only observable in the chastened rhythm of the book's style and occasional root-and-branch sentences like, "A short day's sail away ran the coast of Normandy, where a race of Gallo-Romans, with a slight but transforming admixture of Scandinavian blood, were chafing under their superabundant energy."

Beyond the mention of sheep and the names of a few trees there is practically nothing in the book about the flora and fauna of Sussex. Snipe are alluded to once, but with some hesitation (Mr. Belloc is not quite sure if they are still to be found in a certain marshy locality) and the woodpecker in reference to its local name "yaffle." With such a dearth of wings and feathers on the horizon, one is fortunate indeed to hear nothing about the swan or the phoenix. The geology of the county is, however, treated with some thoroughness, and there is much in the book about the Sussex rivers, but without reference to their fish life or any other kind of life. He is at his most interesting when he writes in a general sort of way about the Weald country and the Downs, which latter have "always stood like a monstrous green wave blown forward before the south-west wind." He terminates the book with four pages of grand prose in which he mourns the destruction of this marvellous county by vile modern architecture and "the blind inhuman mechanic clatter" of the tarred road.

Mr. Edmund Vale's *Seas and Shores of England* seems written and compiled to tempt the blind inhuman clatterer away from his machine. It is a crowded topographical work, a massive glorified guide book, but cordially introduced by Sir Arthur Quiller Couch, who rains blessings on it because it studies "the land from the sea." It contains well over a hundred very fine photographs, many of them taken, one imagines, from a boat. Surely so many excellent photographs were never before assembled in a single volume.

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"LESS BREAD MORE TAXES"

Markets and Men: A Study of Artificial Control Schemes in Some Primary Industries. By J. W. F. ROWE. *Cambridge University Press.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. Rowe sets out in the book to present in a popular form some of the data concerning artificial restriction schemes some of which he has analysed at greater length in recent years in a series of special memoranda written mainly for the London and Cambridge Economic Service; and he adds to his account of these schemes an attempt to estimate their merits and demerits both under the conditions that existed before the world depression and thereafter. The result is an interesting little volume not covering the whole

field of artificial restriction of output—for it deals only with primary raw materials and confines itself mainly to an analysis of a limited number of schemes—but within its limited range highly illuminating. Mr. Rowe has the great merit of approaching his subject from a realistic standpoint. While he is unsparing in revealing how in certain cases the consumers have been made to pay through the nose as a consequence of artificial restrictions, he recognises that in certain of the cases which he reviews it was simply out of the question for the peoples or Governments of the producing countries to let the situation alone and rely on the forces of *laisser faire* to bring about in the long run a new equilibrium between production and consumption. He does not deny that, if things could have been left alone, equilibrium might in the end have been restored; but he shows clearly that where a country depends upon a single commodity, as Brazil depends on coffee, or Malaya and the Dutch Indies upon rubber, a strict adherence to *laisser faire* would have involved the complete ruin of the economic life of the people long before there could have been a hope of a return to "normal" conditions.

Mr. Rowe therefore views restriction schemes, if not with approval, at any rate with a degree of tolerance and even sympathy still somewhat rare among professional economists. Nevertheless, the facts which his survey brings out seem no less shocking to him than they are bound to appear to his readers. For example, he opens his chapter on the Brazilian coffee control with a picture of well over one million people in Brazil slaving away for two years on end, mostly in sweltering heat, in order to produce a coffee crop, prepare it for the market by a long series of elaborate operations, carry it by mule and railway for many miles to the market centre, and then set the whole lot of it alight in order to hold up the price of the stocks already accumulated from past surpluses. This extraordinary procedure had to be gone through because it was impossible to devise any way of controlling the output, or of ensuring the destruction of the surplus product, except by putting it through all the various stages of manufacture.

This is an extreme case; but Mr. Rowe recounts others hardly less startling. Thus the price of tin has been kept at a level between two and three times as high as would enable the relatively low cost producers from the East to supply the entire demands of the world market and realise a profit for themselves. We are all familiar with the ploughing in of American cotton and the subsequent payment of large bonuses to the American producers in order to bribe them into refraining from production. We know, too, though not with the accuracy with which Mr. Rowe narrates the story, how in face of an enormous surplus of sugar-producing capacity in Cuba, one country after another, including our own, has set to work to increase its acreage under sugar-beet at a cost in subsidies or excess charges to the consumers far beyond the total price at which the sugar could have been bought and imported from abroad. Anyone who reads Mr. Rowe's book can easily prolong this catalogue of absurdities—and Mr. Rowe, as we have seen, ranges over only a small part of the total field.

Nevertheless, there is a case for restriction. Very broadly Mr. Rowe sums up with the opinion that restriction is economically sound as a means of meeting a temporary decline in demand both during times of prosperity and depression, provided that no substantial proportion of the productive capacity is in an advanced stage of obsolescence—so that it would pay better to install fresh plant if demand increased than to keep in use the higher-cost plants already in existence. He holds that restriction is economically unsound as a means of meeting a permanent decline in demand during times of prosperity, but that it may be justifiable in times of depression until trade is improving, because of the extreme difficulty of bringing about a readjustment of resources at the bottom of the slump, when high-cost producers are likely to hang on desperately and even to increase their output as prices fall. He thus offers a limited defence of the action taken by Governments in recent years, but at the same time warns us against the almost general view of producers and their Governments that restriction is a panacea to be applied in all ways which seem to offer prospects of momentary advantage. "The truth," he says, "is that restriction is an extremely powerful drug which in wise and discriminating hands can be used to effect great improvements in the world's economic organisation; but if used as a panacea it will certainly bring some patients near to death, even though it will naturally by chance assist others." Mr. Rowe has therefore written his book in the hope of teaching both producers and Governments a few elementary facts about the art of industrial doctoring.

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GENTLE WRITING

An Ordinary Life. By KAREL CAPEK. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

Apart from President Benes (sometimes called Mr. Beans in this country), the only Czech whose name is familiar to the English public is Karel Capek. Some people remember *The Insect Play* and *R.U.R.* (" robot," after all, is now part of the English language); many more know that most affectionate and amusing of all gardening books *The Gardeners' Year*. And Capek is also a writer of children's stories and a considerable novelist.

An Ordinary Life is the last of a trilogy of books with the same central idea. It is the life story of an honest railway official who found that he was soon going to die and thought that he would round off and tidy up his life as he had everything else. The right ending would be a nice straightforward account of his very uneventful career. He thought it an easy job. So it was at first. And then he found to his horror that his life had not really been tidy at all. There were half a dozen or more people in him and they had left all sorts of loose ends lying about that the respectable railway official had managed not to notice. Apart from this conscientious, decent bureaucrat, there was also a pushful fellow with elbows who butted his way along not too scrupulously, a crotchety hypochondriac, a poet who had to be suppressed young, and a secret romantic who never got properly tucked away.

More surprising there was a hero too in the ordinary man; a Czech station-master serving the hated Austrians in the war, he found himself quietly organising a whole series of acts of sabotage on the railway line. He never enjoyed anything in his life so much as the sense of working with other men who daily chose to share with him the risk of being hanged as traitors.

This is a good idea for a book and to handle it requires just that delicate and sensitive quality which is Capek's own. But the hard-boiled reader of modern fiction will complain that the style is gentle and sugary; that Capek writes as if his readers were children and that it would have been well for him if he had never heard of Freud. To which there is no answer except that if you do not like gentle writing you will not like Capek and that there is at least one piece of the book that is magnificently successful. Nothing could be better than Capek's train world; we may not think much of our ordinary man as a child, we may have doubts about him as a romantic, but as a porter and station-master managing a platform and making us feel what it is like to be responsible for trains though you seldom travel in them yourself, Capek's hero is a delightful and indubitable success.

MODERN IRELAND

The Spirit of Ireland. By LYNN DOYLE. *Batsford.* 7s. 6d.
Ireland (Eire). By J. CHARTRES MOLONY. *Arrowsmith.* 5s.
Modern Ireland. BY CICELY HAMILTON. *Dent.* 7s. 6d.

Romantic Ireland appears at last to be dead and gone. Coal-cattle pacts and other trade agreements remind us from time to time of the country's existence. But meanwhile the Irish Free State is passing through an extraordinarily interesting period of transition and social reform. Factories spring up overnight, social life has narrowed but intensified itself. The literary movement has been transferred to the air and all the Dublin intelligentsia listens-in, caustically, to the broadcasting of poets, novelists and playwrights. The gunmen have all vanished, leaving the realist writers also in the air. The other day I met one of the best known and youngest leaders of the Black and Tan regimes and the Civil War. He had become once more a first year medical student and he told me that the medicals were no longer a wild lot, but sober, serious young fellows, intent on passing their examinations.

Despite the fact that Ireland is no longer in the news, books about Ireland appear regularly. Mr. Lynn Doyle's original and individual guide has already gone into an immediate second edition. But the English reader who happened upon Mr. Doyle's book and Mr. Molony's historical survey might well be puzzled by the seeming Irish riddle. Mr. Doyle is an Ulsterman who writes under a Gaelic pen-name and his picture of Ireland is kindly, humorous and idealistic. Mr. Molony is a Clare man of Catholic ancestry, but his picture of his country is dark, forbidding and atrabilious. The social and political views of both writers condition their view of England. Mr. Doyle is convinced that England has mended her ways and no longer believes that she has a mission to civilise older races. Mr. Molony seems to be equally certain that England's only imperial hope is still strong government and blimpism.

As a humorous short story writer, Mr. Lynn Doyle is well known and this delightfully illustrated guide book is actually a record of human contacts and of happy experiences. Mr. Doyle wishes to stimulate the intending tourist and he sets him sly intelligence tests:

> " How long did South Kerry continue to struggle against the Normans? " I asked a South Kerry man. " Till 1935," he answered.

And this is typical of Mr. Doyle's method of revealing the cryptic native mind. But the spirit of Mr. Doyle's Ireland belongs rather to the past than to the present. One would not guess from this good-natured account the new tendencies and rapid transformations of to-day.

Mr. Molony's historical study is uniform with " England " by Mr. Douglas Jerrold. Mr. Molony, as we learn, has spent most of his life as a civil servant in India and now lives in England. He returned to find an Ireland unknown to his own generation. To him the Irish Free State is ruled by a Spanish-American dictator, Arthur Griffith was a Welshman, Michael Collins was a murderer. This is the third book about Ireland which he has written in the last few years and he has a peculiar macabre style, a shrewd critical sense mixed with a fantastic inability to accept realities.

Mr. Doyle's Ireland is human and actual though slightly sentimental. Mr. Molony's Ireland is an abstract conception, lacking in human contact and it reveals the self-tormenting Irish mind.

To balance these two views of Ireland with their opposing attitudes of goodwill and tragic gloom we have Miss Cicely Hamilton's survey. As an Englishwoman, investigating social and political conditions in Ireland, Miss Hamilton has not permitted herself to indulge in emotional reactions. She does not appear to be very enthusiastic over the experimental policy of *Fianna Fail* and its aims of a self-supporting community of smallholders. But she has determined to be scrupulously fair. She gives both sides of every question, she counters every political opinion with its opposite, she quotes liberally from conversations, newspapers, speeches of deputies and she seems to have read all the available works of rival historians. She has even investigated the smuggling between North and South and gathered some current stories which are almost as good as facts. On one occasion a farmer had contracted with a " smuggling man " to drive a bull across the border. The moon was at the full and the night clear but the drover assured the owner that the beast would go over in broad daylight:

> As, in fact, it did, and with no attempt to stop it; the ingenious smuggler leading it openly along the road and then, at a convenient distance from the customs barrier, dropping the halter and goading the bull into a run. He himself having given it a start, pursued it at a distance which made capture impossible before the barrier was reached—shouting, as he ran, appeals to the official in charge of the barrier to stop his runaway beast! The said official, excusably enough, had no fancy for tackling an escaping bull; on the contrary, he hastily made way for it and the Free State bull made its entry into Ulster with the drover panting and shouting in its wake. Hardly needful to state that neither bull nor drover was seen again at the barrier.

Admirable and informative, however, as this book is, it is lacking in imaginative insight. It gives us the outer facts rather than those deeper emotions which count for more in Ireland. Nevertheless, there is one fact on which Miss Hamilton rightly insists. Against the ideal of self-sufficiency in the future must be counted the religious ban on family limitation. Yet here, too, a proviso may be added. Even the casual observer will note that, at any rate, in the middle class, the Irish family is now no bigger, as a rule; than an English family of to-day.

AUSTIN CLARKE

THE PLEASURES OF BELIEVING

Philosophy and Faith. By DOROTHY M. EMMET. *Student Christian Movement Press.* 4s. 6d.

Miss Emmet's object is to show that philosophy and religion are necessary to each other. Her book is well written, well argued, sensible and up-to-date. Nevertheless, I find it curiously unconvincing. Miss Emmet begins by drawing attention to the antagonism which historically has existed between philosophy and religion. Philosophy uses the instrument of the critical reason to explore the universe, and is ready to entertain any hypothesis in regard to its nature *as a hypothesis*. Religion regards

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some truths as being beyond the reach of the critical reason, those, namely, that we are required to accept on faith, and, instead of entertaining many hypotheses, asserts an absolute and revealed truth. Here are all the elements of a first-rate quarrel.

Consider, for example, the deliverances of the critical reason on the subject of prayer. Either, it affirms, there is God or there is not. If there is not, it is no use praying to Him. If there is, He must be presumed to have already made up His mind in regard to the issues to which the person praying proposes to draw His attention. The object of the person praying is, then, to turn Him from His intention, to alter His mind, since, if this were not the object of the prayer, it would be superfluous. Thus one presupposition of prayer is, as Plato pointed out, that God does not always will what is best in the first instance. Another presupposition is that He is changeable. Both are insulting. Miss Emmet appropriately quotes Hazel's prayer from Mary Webb's *Gone to Earth*: "'If there's anybody there, I'd be obleeged if you'd give an eye to our Foxy, as is lonesome in tub.'" A very proper prayer for a philosopher, but most improper for a man of faith. For, as Miss Emmet comments, "whoever worshipped a tenable hypothesis or a balance of probabilities?"

It is not difficult to see why the man of faith should dislike and fear the critical reason of the philosopher. Miss Emmet summarises the indictment of a contemporary theologian as follows: "Truth is only attainable by those who could hear the word of God and could give themselves to it in absolute obedience. But this inevitably involved an irrational leap which the philosopher was pledged not to make." The conclusion seems to be that whatever the philosopher thinks, he is bound to be wrong. Both sides, Miss Emmet insists, are the losers by this quarrel. The believer loses the value of a mental discipline and too often tends to accept faith as a substitute for thinking, because he is an incompetent thinker, while the philosopher cuts himself off from a whole department of experience. This, Miss Emmet insists, he does to his cost. The wider a man's experience, the better, she suggests, will be his thinking, and philosophy tends to become ineffective if the head is unwarmed by the heart and unenlightened by the spirit. "Nothing," said Burke, whom Miss Emmet quotes, "can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thoroughbred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man."

Nor are the virtues of a living faith confined to making the philosopher a better thinker. They make him also a happier man. Possibly; possibly not! But if so, what is the recipe for this highly desirable faith? It may be very nice to believe that the universe embodies a plan and that there is a purpose which makes for good at the heart of things. Speaking for myself, nothing would give me greater satisfaction. But how is one to come by this belief, if most of the evidence seems to one to point in the contrary direction? According to Miss Emmet the recipe is contained in the one word "love." "Within a Christian society the philosopher should find that it is also true that he learns to understand because he loves." Not only, then, is he required to believe that the universe is good; he must also judge that his fellow creatures are lovable, and love them accordingly. But how if many of his fellow creatures seem to him to be emphatically not lovable? Then I suppose we must write him off as a bad philosopher. If Miss Emmet's own Christian philosophy is true, then I am quite prepared to believe that these results follow, for, if Christianity is true, only a Christian philosopher can, it is obvious, be a good one, and Christian philosophers, presumably, love their fellows. But to say that if one has faith a certain kind of philosophy will necessarily be true, is not to effect a reconciliation between religion and philosophy but only to work out the philosophical consequences of accepting a certain religion. From another standpoint faith may be represented as the power of believing things which are comfortable, and philosophy as the art of persuading oneself that what it is comfortable to believe is also true.

C. E. M. JOAD

SHORTER NOTICES

Through Forbidden Tibet. By HARRISON FORMAN, M.E.C. *Jarrolds.* 18*s.*

Nowhere Else in the World. By GORDON ENDERS, with EDWARD ANTHONY. *Hurst and Blackett.* 18*s.*

For a forbidden land Tibet seems to be singularly open to the adventurous. Travellers prepared to take their life in their hands—the Tibetan bandit is ubiquitous—will find the frontier open and the Tibetans a friendly and cheerful people. Both Mr. Forman and Mr. Enders are Americans; and, Mr. Forman by personal exploration and Mr. Enders by lifelong association with important Tibetans, both are qualified to write of the country and its people. Mr. Forman's two white companions were murdered in Kansu, so he was forced to give up the adventure or push on alone. Thanks to the faithfulness of his Tibetan guides, and to his own gift for friendship, he won the goodwill of the Lamas, with whom he made early contact, and was as a consequence able to see much of the country and the people under favourable conditions, and, more, to secure many cinematograph records of their religious and other festivals. Mr. Forman admits that he is an easy subject for the hypnotist, and his stories of the hypnotic-telepathic powers of some of his hosts are curiously weird. But it is his engaging pictures of his Tibetan friends, high and low, and he was familiar with the highest, that give his exciting story its most enjoyable quality.

Mr. Enders as a boy lived with his family; his father was an American teacher, on the Indian-Tibetan border, and there from a Tibetan, educated in India and engaged as a local unofficial go-between for the British, acquired a curiously intimate knowledge of Tibet, and of the Russian and other intrigues of the time which were so disturbing an influence prior to the Younghusband expedition. Mr. Enders eventually went home to complete his education, but the East called him, and presently he was in Shanghai and in confidential touch with the Panchan Lama, to whom he became adviser in the Panchan's dream of a Tibetan-Mongolian Empire, run on modern lines from a new capital in North Eastern Tibet. The book provides much curious information with regard to Tibet and the mentality of its theocratic rulers. Mr. Enders appears to have a high opinion of the potential mineral riches of the country awaiting scientific development.

Week-end Competitions

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RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, April 24th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

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Samuel Butler tells in his letters how a certain Sultan asked his jester to invent an apology which was worse than the crime it was intended to excuse; and how, later, the jester pinched the Sultan's leg and said, "I am sorry, I thought it was the Sultana's." We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half-a-Guinea for a letter of apology, on similar lines, to a week-end host.

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EVGS., 8.30. Mats., WED. & SAT., 2.30.
ANTHONY AND ANNA.
A Comedy by ST. JOHN ERVINE.

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Music by FRANZ LEHAR.

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Mon. next, April 20th, for SEVEN DAYS.
EISENSTEIN'S
POTEMKIN
Also BASIL WRIGHT'S, *SONG OF CEYLON* (U).

TRANSPORT HOUSE,
Smith Sq., Millbank, Westminster.
"END OF ST. PETERSBURG"
(Pudovkin's famous Anti-war film)
also shorts: "U.S.S.R." and "PEACE,"
SAT., APRIL 18th,
12 noon; 2.15: 4.30; 6.45 and 9.0 p.m.
1s. to 3s. 6d. (12 noon—all seats, 1s.).

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AH well, if you've not been to RULES you have missed a lot in life. . . . Maiden Lane (Covent Garden). Lunch, Dinner or late Supper (licensed till midnight). Est. 1780.

THIS paper may be read in "The Book" RESTAURANT and WINE DIVE facing the British Museum, also subscriptions received.

DANCE

"ALL Russian Evening" Dance, Suffolk Galleries, Haymarket. Saturday, April 18th, 8 p.m.—1 a.m. Tickets 2s. from "Russia To-day," 28 John St., W.C.1. 2s. 6d. at door.

SUPPER

UNIVERSITY LABOUR FEDERATION Monthly Supper at National Trade Union Club, 24 New Oxford Street, W.C.1, on Friday, APRIL 24th, 7 p.m. to 9.30. 1s. 3d. DR. HUGH DALTON, M.P. will speak on FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

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Evenings 6.30 & 8.50.
The Dover Road. By A. A. Milne.

The Repertory Theatres whose announcements appear above are members of The Association of Repertory Theatres. *For information concerning Theatres belonging to this Association, or qualified to belong to it, apply to the Honorary Secretary, Bache Matthews, 44 Archway Road, London, N.19. ARC 3845.*

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LANCASHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY

One female technical assistant is required at a salary of £130—£10—£220, subject to 5 per cent. deduction under the County Council's superannuation scheme. Candidates must have completed the course for the Diploma of the Library Association or of the School of Librarianship. Applications, accompanied by copies of three testimonials, must reach the DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, County Offices, Preston, by the first post on April 25th.

APPLICATIONS are invited for the vacant office of Sub-Warden of the University Settlement, and Director of the York House Boys' Club. Salary £250 per annum. Candidates must be men of not more than 35 years of age. Full particulars of duties may be had on application to the WARDEN, University Settlement, Nile Street, Liverpool, 1.

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A warden (woman) who is also Tutor to the Glasgow School of Social Study, is required for the Glasgow University Settlement to commence duties on Sept. 1st. Candidates must have training and experience in social and settlement work and preferably hold a University degree. Applications with testimonials and references must be sent to the HON. SECRETARY, 17 Kew Terrace, Glasgow, W.2, on or before April 30th.

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Report by V. S. Pritchett

The English week-end does not appear to stimulate that farcical tactlessness which Samuel Butler was hoping for when he told the Sultana story to Miss Savage. Several competitors, notably *Sennacherib* and L. P. B., took the line that several small tricks would make up for the lack of one good large one—"Mrs. Framlingham (you know the woman who wants capital punishment)"—and here we got variations on such themes as coming on the wrong week-end, "your simple fare" and mistaking Uncle George for the butler. Now, I was hoping for something really ghastly. B. J. R. Moreton has a neat bedroom trick: "I hope the Dowager has ceased to fulminate against me for accidentally breaking into her room that night! Of course, it was completely by mistake that I did it: I never realised that she and Daffodil had exchanged rooms."

But, on going over the bedrooms in this competition I have come to the conclusion that they and the other apartments ought to be banned, as I believe they are among the best Consequence players. It is hard to say whether these bedroom pieces are better brief or in painful elaboration. R. D. C. did an elaborate one and W. J. G. Edge talked about the King's Proctor—an ominous name to a week-end host with a nice suggestion of blackmail. But why weren't there open blackmail, robbery, suicide or murder at these week-ends? Why no drink in the piano, no fusing of lights, no peppering of the host's calves? I was panting for sensation. I am disappointed that competitors did not see their way beyond a little polite adultery and a couple of flagrant or mistaken kissings. I take no great pride in the winners, but Lovelace's entry seems to me to have the right kind of brevity and some Sultana quality; a Sultana quality of another kind is in Mrs. Britten's letter. I am even rather haunted by the suspicion that it may be chestnut, but the risk must be taken. So First Prize, Lovelace; Second Prize, Mrs. Britten:

FIRST PRIZE

DEAR ——,

Many thanks for a most interesting week-end. Your anger at seeing me kissing your wife was natural enough. Please accept my apologies, and believe me when I say that under the circumstances it was the least I could do.

Yours sincerely,
"LOVELACE"

SECOND PRIZE

DEAR MR. ROUGEACRE,

Many thanks for the most enjoyable week-end in the country, and for your and your wife's kind hospitality. Unfortunately, my pleasure has been much overshadowed by the horrible *faux pas* I made during tea on Sunday. Seeing my obvious enjoyment of the cakes we had for tea, you mentioned your wife had made them. And then, turning to compliment her, I unfortunately said, "Mrs. Rougeacre, you are a born cook"; I thought at the time she did not respond, but never did I realise, that instead of complimenting her, I was being merely insulting. You can imagine my horror when Jones pointed my error out to me, whilst driving me home. Please do convey my deepest apologies to your wife, and explain that when I made my unfortunate remark I had no idea you had really married your cook.

Yours sincerely,
E. J. BRITTEN

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 173.—RED AND WHITE

"Here," said Professor Diddleham, "I have a number of red and white balls."

He placed a number of each in each of two bags.

"Now," said the Professor, "I propose to draw, at random, three balls from each bag." He did so. All the balls drawn were white.

"Unlikely, that was," said the Professor. "More unlikely in the case of bag A than of bag B. In fact the respective probabilities—that all three balls drawn are white—are in the ratio of 13 to 48."

Next, the Professor replaced the three white balls in each bag. He now transferred three balls from bag B to bag A. Then, having well shaken the bags, he again drew three balls from each. Again all the balls drawn were white.

"Astonishing," said the Professor. He made a rapid mental calculation. "And this time the probability that only white balls will be drawn is 60 times as great, in respect of bag B, as it is in respect of bag A."

How many balls are there of each colour?

Solutions of Problems 170 and 171 are held over until next week.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

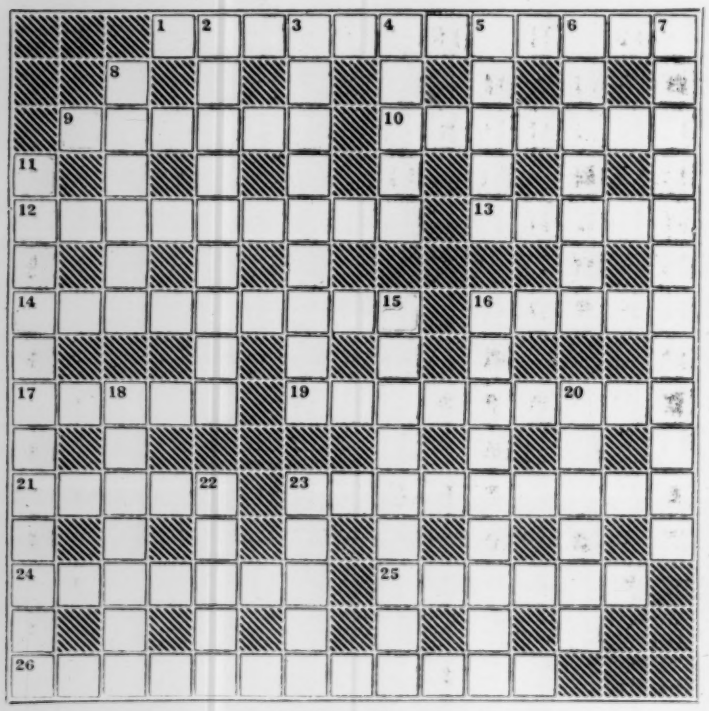
A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution. CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 319

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
H. J. Bostock, Shawms, Radford Bank, Stafford

ACROSS

1. Raiding instruction for using street fire alarm.
9. What a poet writes when he stands a drink.
10. Fulness of it gives one second sight as it were.
12. He had most uncavalier ways.
13. You may take it it's to be pinched.
14. What the cook says to make her confections rise?
16. The visitor returned.
17. Back way from cathedral to chapter house.
19. He's never a mean fellow.
21. Continentally balanced with difficulty.
23. He gives the game away criminally.
24. One's first spit.
25. To do this one consumes 10.
26. It would take a houyhnhnm to carry out such sailing orders.

DOWN

2. Their compositions would be suitable for a one-man show.
3. Chess player's reason for seeking divorce perhaps.
4. Suitable prize for a guarded child.
5. Prisoners' weeds.
6. Put into better homes no doubt.
7. Spaniards' name for British antagonists?
8. Stopped work when hit like this.
11. Can the batsman touch it undefiled?
15. Dates between which you may view Eton.
16. (rev.) It isn't on the cheeky elf.
18. Going up this provides aerial but not aeronautical transport.
20. Rude reverse of occult?
22. Island with a Communist reputation in the poultry run.
23. Letter made by the mouth.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

H	U	S	S	■	S	H	E	E	P	F	O	L	D	S
A	■	T	■	W	■	E	■	N	■	I	■	A	■	L
L	A	R	C	H	E	S	■	D	E	L	A	I	N	E
F	■	I	■	E	■	S	■	O	■	L	■	C	■	D
L	A	D	I	E	S	I	N	W	A	I	T	I	N	G
E	■	E	■	L	■	A	■	E	■	N	■	Z	■	E
F	E	S	T	O	O	N	E	D	■	G	L	E	N	■
T	■	■	■	F	■	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	■	A
■	W	O	L	F	■	F	A	S	T	T	R	A	I	N
T	■	U	■	O	■	O	■	A	■	A	■	P	■	G
I	N	T	E	R	P	R	E	T	A	T	I	O	N	S
P	■	L	■	T	■	S	■	I	■	I	■	S	■	T
P	R	I	M	U	L	A	■	R	O	O	S	T	E	R
E	■	E	■	N	■	K	■	I	■	N	■	I	■	O
T	H	R	E	E	P	E	N	C	E	■	S	L	A	M

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LAST week I spent a brief holiday at the foot of the South Downs—walking, talking books, music, art, and country life, especially horses. If any other readers like this kind of "break," I can thoroughly recommend BENBECULA, DITCHLING, SUSSEX. By the way, it isn't quite the simple life—there's a bathroom, hot and cold water in bedrooms and electric light! This little advertisement is a gesture of gratitude for a good time.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

CONTROL OF FOREIGN ISSUES—ADVISORY COMMITTEE—UNITED GAS AND ELECTRIC POWER AND LIGHT—COAL SHARES

PARTIAL Government control of national investment has been in force since the suspension of the gold standard in 1931, but it has been vague, unsatisfactory, inconclusive and unintelligent—and unauthorised by Parliament at that. I fear that the appointment of an Advisory Committee on foreign issues does not make it any better. "Control" at present exists in regard to certain domestic issues as well as foreign—namely optional conversions of trustee stocks involving underwriting or cash subscription from the public. Moreover, no trustee issue of any sort can be made without prior agreement with the Bank of England as to the amount and date of the issue. This has undoubtedly served to prevent the gilt-edged market being flooded by new issues—to the detriment of the next borrower—but it has also operated to restrict home corporation borrowing in relief of unemployment. Nothing is proposed by the Chancellor to improve, regularise or legalise this control of trustee issues. The new Advisory Committee is to advise the Chancellor only on the scope of the restriction of foreign loans and upon particular applications for foreign issues. In the memorandum defining the terms of reference of the Committee, the Chancellor of the Exchequer discloses his real political motives. The primary object, it is alleged, is to protect the sterling exchanges against sudden and dislocating strain and domestic borrowers against excessive lending overseas. [Foreign loans, the proceeds of which are used to finance additional exports from Great Britain, are therefore outside control.] But the Committee is instructed (1) to favour applications from British-owned enterprises abroad as against foreign Governments or municipalities; (2) to take into consideration the treatment accorded to British-owned enterprises by the foreign country concerned; (3) to favour sterling issues by a country within the sterling area where the loan is required to increase the sterling assets of the country and so minimise fluctuations in the exchange.

* * *

Obviously, the Advisory Committee is created not so much to consider economic necessities or values as to further the policies of the Government in the matter of monetary stabilisation and Empire trade and to bring pressure upon foreign countries in the making of trade and exchange agreements. Action on these lines may be all to the good but it should not be imposed upon a body of City gentlemen who are not politicians but bankers and traders. If exchange considerations were the main object of the Chancellor he should have included within the terms of the Committee's reference the restriction of the invisible export of British capital for investment in Wall Street. It is absurd to consider restricting "the acquisition of large blocks of foreign securities with a view to resale," which do not in these days amount to many tens of millions (£s) in a year, and leave out of account the steady exodus of private capital to Wall Street, which may amount to some hundreds of millions. No, the Chancellor is really actuated by political considerations. He wants an outside body either to help him in bringing pressure to bear on foreign Governments in making exchange and trade agreements or to protect him against embarrassing questions from members of Parliament in the event of a loan to Germany or Italy being proposed by a City house. We are as far removed as ever before from the rational conception of a National Investment Board designed to help the Government not in foreign political problems but in the domestic problem of curing unemployment. I suggest that the Labour Party should demand a debate in the House of Commons on this important question of economic policy.

* * *

As Wall Street persistently swallows the most ridiculous reports about the European political situation it has been possible for the nimble London operator to "trade" in American stocks with some little success in recent weeks. This week, for example, had some excellent buying days. Wall Street was busy discounting an early Anglo-Italian war. I repeat that on the development of market strength in the next six weeks, which is a pretty certain prospect, some profits should be taken on American stocks. A reader asks whether this policy should apply to United Gas Corporation $7 first preferred and Electric Power and Light $6 preferred stocks recommended at 76 and 24½ and now quoted at 97½ and 58 respectively. Hardly. The arrears of dividend amount to $23.375 and $20.5 per share respectively. United Gas earnings are steadily rising and in the nine months to September 30th, 1935, it more than earned the dividend on the $7 preferred shares (annual rate of dividend cover 1.41 times). In the first quarter of this year it is believed even to have earned something on its common shares. Apart from its natural gas earnings the company is busily developing the new oilfield it discovered beneath its gas properties at Rodessa, which is on the borders of Louisiana and Texas. It has completed 30 wells producing about 12,000 barrels a day of crude oil and is drilling 25 more wells. It is estimated that the company has an interest in about one-third of the total area of this important field. The payment of dividends on the preferred stocks of United Gas must, however, wait upon the funding of its bank loans. The earnings of Electric Power and Light which owns practically all the second preferred shares and half the common shares of United Gas are also forging ahead and it is said that this year the company will show about five dollars a share earned on its preferred stocks. I adhere to my recommendation of last December, namely, that United Gas and Electric Power and Light preferred stocks are among the best speculations in the utility market.

* * *

Coal shares offer fascinating opportunities for statistical comparison if one has the time to dig up the available figures. My statistical assistant, who is apt to let his zeal for arithmetic run away with him, suggests that there may be some scope for money-making in shares of selected colliery companies. He bases his recommendations mainly on the following figures of the profits of coal-mining in various districts:

PROFIT (AFTER DEPRECIATION) PER TON OF COAL SOLD.

Yearly Average.	North Derby and Notts.	Yorks.	Lancs.	Scotland.	Durham.	South. Wales.
	d.	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*	*d.*
1933 ..	+11.3	+ 9.3	+ 1.6	− 0.2	−4.5	−1.5
1934 ..	+12.3	+10.6	+ 5.2	+ 5.8	−2.9	−1.3
1935 ..	+13.7	+10.2	+ 7.6	+10.7	−3.5	−1.0
Quarters ending—						
Dec. 1934	+16.3	+12.9	+10.9	+11.7	−3.5	−3.9
Dec. 1935	+24.9	+17.8	+21.9	+21.9	+1.0	+7.5

Statistical Assistant: Of course, not all the mines in any one district are making the same rate of profit, for natural conditions and management efficiency vary widely between mine and mine. Nevertheless, an upward trend in profits is unmistakable. Generally speaking, the recent wage increase has been at least counter balanced by the increase in the price of coal.

Toreador: I have heard it said that the mines have been concentrating on the better working faces within each pit so that the richer seams will be exhausted quickly. If this is the explanation of the good profit figures for the last quarter of 1935, I am not impressed by your argument.

Statistical Assistant: Admittedly, the coal owners in the aggregate appear to have adopted a short-sighted policy ever since the war and have shown no great inclination to put their house in order. Costs, however, have been reduced since 1929 by some 7*d.* per ton in the aggregate, in spite of a considerable decline in output. Central selling schemes may succeed in raising prices, while there is always the possibility that production in each district may be concentrated in the more efficient mines. Of course, consumption may not increase materially unless the export and shipping trade counterbalance a possible fall in domestic demand.

Toreador: I have grave doubts about the long-term trend of consumption—the greater our efficiency in generating heat and power the less coal we shall use—but I admit that some of your shares seem attractive.

	Year ended	Earnings %	Dividend %	Present Price.	Yield % on Earnings.	Yield % on Dividend.
North Derby and Notts—						
Bolsover	31 Dec., 1935	14.3	9	39/−	£7 6 9	£4 12 3
Shipley	31 Mar., 1935	—	7 est.	29/−	—	£4 16 6
South Yorkshire—						
Yorkshire Amalgamated	31 Mar., 1936	—	4 est.	16/3	—	£4 18 6
Lancashire—						
Manchester Colliery	31 Mar., 1936	—	4 est.	15/6	—	£5 3 3
Scotland—						
Fife Coal	31 Dec., 1935	8.3 net	7½ net	42/6	£5 0 9	£4 11 0
Durham—						
Horden	30 Sep., 1935	5.0	5	22/9	£4 8 0	£4 8 0

Agreed: Bolsover, Shipley and Fife seem to be the least speculative.

Company Meeting

NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY

RECORD BONUSES MAINTAINED.

The 128th annual general meeting of the Norwich Union Life Insurance Society was held on Wednesday at Norwich.

Dr. Sam Barton (senior vice-president) presided in the absence of the president, Mr. Michael Falcon, and read his speech, in the course of which he said that if, from a British standpoint, the year 1935 might be regarded as one of restrained industrial progress, they must nevertheless confess that the recovery which had so far been achieved from the protracted period of trade depression did not admit of feelings of complacency or of any relaxation of effort.

Throughout the whole of the past five years those whose responsibilities included the supervision of large funds had had to contend with unsettled conditions, accompanied by a decline in investment yields, yet not only were they enabled to maintain the same high scales of bonuses as those allocated in 1930, which were the largest ever declared during the society's long history, but they commenced the new quinquennium with their reserves unimpaired.

The annual premium income of the society now exceeded £4,000,000, which was approximately the amount of the invested funds at the beginning of the century, as compared with funds today of £42,000,000. This was an indication of the development which had taken place, and while the funds had increased 10 times during the period, the profits had increased in still greater ratio. The difficulties affecting all financial institutions, incidental to the investing of new money, showed no sign of abatement in 1935, and consequently a drop in the average earned rate of interest was not only to be expected, but was in fact inevitable. It was, therefore, a matter of great satisfaction that the average net rate of £4 10s. 2d. fell short of the corresponding figure of 1934 by only 1s. 8d. per cent. The claim payments by death were £1,041,330, or 64 per cent. of expectation. The average for the quinquennium worked out at 66 per cent., indicating a favourable mortality experience.

It was self-evident that a progressive institution such as theirs, producing as it did last year new proposals amounting to £10,787,590, could not avoid the expenses necessarily involved in the acquisition of business, but the subject of expenses was constantly under supervision. Their level ratio last year was 15.03 per cent. of the premiums received, which was slightly under the percentage for 1934.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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